

Femme Fatales

Winter 1992/1993

ON THE FILMS

\$5.50
CAN \$6.75
UK £3.50

KATHY IRELAND
ELVIRA
INGRID PITT
VIVIAN SCHILLING
LANA CLARKSON

MICHELLE PFEIFFER
ON GETTING CATTY

CATWOMAN UNMASKED



CINEFANTASTIQUE COVERS



Volume 22 Number 6

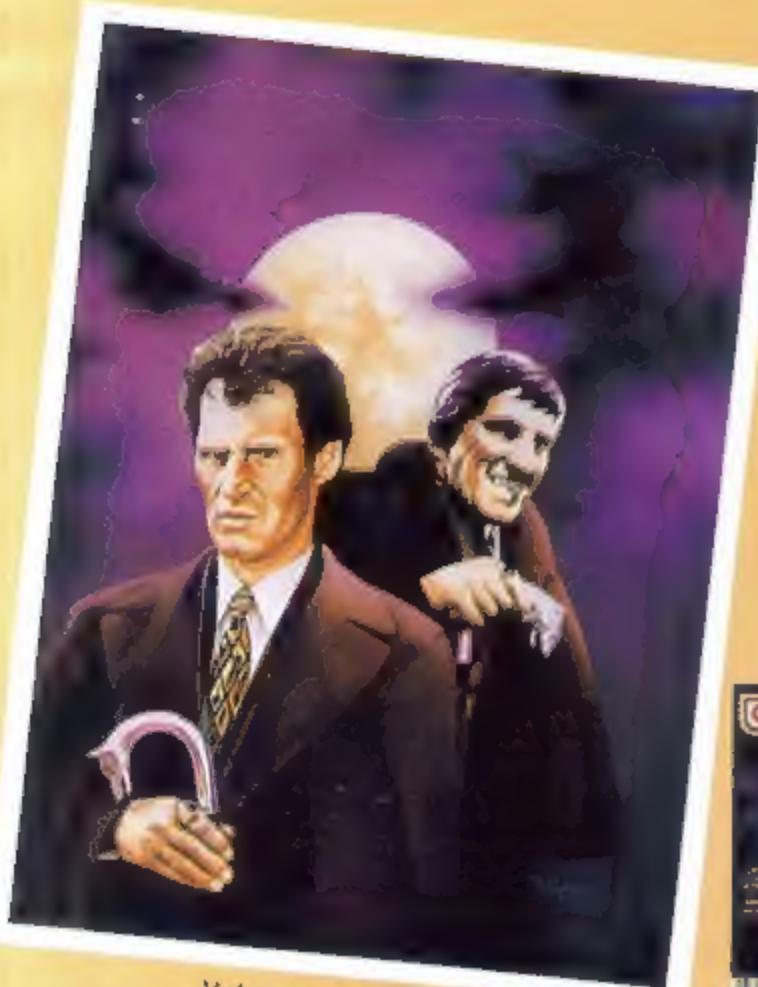


18 x 24 Signed, Limited Edition Art Posters

Large, full-color art prints of artist David Voigt's cover paintings for *Cinefantastique* magazine are now available. A limited edition of 2,500 of each poster has been printed on 80# enamel stock, and comes rolled in a shipping tube, personally signed and numbered by the artist. Each poster is \$6.95. Order two posters for \$12.95, three posters for \$18.95, or a set of all four, only \$23.95. Order these rare collector's items while supplies last!



Volume 22 Number 5



Volume 21 Number 3

Cinefantastique Back Issues

THE review of horror, fantasy and science fiction films, now in our 23rd year.

Vol 22 No 6: ALIEN 3, ARMY OF DARKNESS, HELLRAISER III, STAR WARS IV.

Vol 22 No 5: STAR TREK VI, ADDAMS FAMILY, NAKED LUNCH, SLEEPWALKERS.

Vol 21 No 3: DARKSHADOWS Returns, PSYCHO IV, NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD.

Vol 22 No 4: SILENCE OF THE LAMBS, ROBOCOP 3, Stephen King, FREEJACK.



Volume 22 Number 4

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE ORDER FORM, SEE PAGE 61

Femme Fatales

Contents

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3

"The Luscious Ladies of Horror, Fantasy & Science Fiction."

WINTER, 1992/1993

OK, so BATMAN RETURNS made a sooner than expected exit from theatres and is already cluttering video shelves. So why is Catwoman occupying our front cover and interior? Well, there's the opportunity to exhibit Jack Pedota's galvanic photography. But there's an even more significant reason. Michelle Pfeiffer's feline combatant is our Woman of the Year: tempestuous, aggressive, independent... and, sadly, all alone in her triumph (Pfeiffer's timid secretary literally puts a mask on her extroverted alter ego. And to think... Catwoman comes to you, courtesy of a major studio, and uncushioned by a stereotypical safety net.

Happily, B-movies are experimental enough to drop the safety nets. Case in point is this issue's DO YOU LIKE WOMEN?. The '63 original was conceptualized with a damsels-in-distress premise. The remake reflects a more modern dilemma: women, already bruised by their male competition, turn into misogynists to protect their own turf. If the film delivers, WOMEN may be the B-film's vicious equivalent of WORKING GIRL.

It appears that, gauging sales, *Femme Fatales* has crossed into the mainstream. Issue #2 sold out at newsstands. Only a couple of book chains have passed on us. Why? They still consider our pictorial content to be provocative. Of course, the same chains distribute *People* and *Entertainment Weekly*... and both family magazines recently boosted sales by printing, respectively, topless and masturbatory/bottomless shots of Madonna. When the Material Girl appears sans clothing—and/or indulging in S&M—she's "making a statement." Thus, her *Sex* book—which has turned a huge profit for Warner Brothers—was embraced by book chains that have resisted *Femme Fatales*. The moral: when it's linked to the corporate big boys, sex makes a statement... as long as it makes a ton of money.

Up next is *Femme Fatales* #4, probably our hottest issue to date, with solid interviews and sexy enough to make a serious "statement." Anyway, I'm off to Rick and Monica's. See you next time.

Bill George



Page 6



Page 12



Page 22



Page 32



Page 52

6 ELVIRA

They needed a hostess "with big boobs." Cassandra Peterson turned her into a phenomenon. / Interview by Dan Cziraky

12 KATHY IRELAND

She packed a bikini for DANGER ISLAND, but wants her acting ability to show. / Interview by Steve Biodrowski

16 THE BRIDES OF "BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA"

Francis Ford Coppola plays matchmaker, casting European newcomers in an unholy wedlock. / Article by Steve Biodrowski

20 THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE

Critics rave over horror comedy, though the budget was smaller than the star's string bikini. / Preview by Al Ryan & Dan Cziraky

22 VOLUPTUOUS VIXENS FROM OUTER SPACE

Jim Wynorski's familiar cast of *femmes fatales* shape up his sorcery and space operas. / Interview by Dan Scapperotti

30 SUZANNE AGER—LIVE!

Before you discover her in next year's crop of horror films, this actress hopes to turn producer. / Article by Larry Greenberg

32 CATWOMAN UNMASKED

Blending feminism and fantasy, Michelle Pfeiffer scratches off her decorative roles of the past. / Interview by Ted Newsom

40 VIVIAN SCHILLING

From sexy starlet to Saturn award-winner, Schilling preps for a career as fantasy film producer. / Interview by John Thonen

46 DO YOU LIKE WOMEN?

Inspired by Roman Polanski, NY filmmakers literally grill actresses in this cannibal comedy. / Article by Debbie Rochon

52 COUNTESS DRACULA

Ingrid Pitt converted the female vampire into a pillar of strength and sexuality. / Interview by Bruce G. Hallenbeck

56 BARBARIAN QUEEN

Lana Clarkson, everyone's favorite Amazon woman, recalls her work for Roger Corman. / Interview by Bruce G. Hallenbeck

4 LETTERS

62 FEMMES ON FILM

5 FATALE ATTRACTIONS

Publisher: Frederick S. Clarke. **Editor:** Bill George. **Associate Editor:** Dan Cziraky. **Art Director:** Joshua J. Kim.

Bureau: Los Angeles/ Michelle Bauer, Brinke Stevens. New York/ Debbie Rochon. Europe/ Manuel Sanchez Fraguas.

Contributors: Steve Biodrowski, Rachel Dane, Larry Greenberg, Bruce C. Hallenbeck, Ted Newsom, Al Ryan, Dan Scapperotti, John Thonen.

Editorial Operations Manager: Elaine Fiedler. **Editorial Production:** Lisa Tomczak. **Production Assistant:** Ruth Kopala.

Circulation: Staci Richardson. **Business Manager:** Celeste Casey Clarke.

PHOTO CREDITS: Jon Abeyta (40, 41, 42, 45); Mike Clemente/NBC Media Relations (12); Dobbin/Bogla Associates, Inc (5B); Jonathan Faber (48, 49, 51); Jonathan Fernandez/Concorde (56); Dan Golden (28T); David Goldner (60); Exposure Images, Inc. (23); Katherine Orloff/Columbia Pictures (16, 17, 18, 19T); Eduardo Patino (47, 50); Jack Pedota (1, 32, 33, 36B, 39T); Shooting Star (15); Robert Strauss (8). **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** Joe Bob Briggs, Eric Caidin, Robin Chaney, Kevin and Susan Clement, Mike Clements, Yoron Cohen, Dobbin/Bogla Associates, Inc., Charles Hicks, Janie V. Janes, Richard Klemensen, Vinnie Mizzi, Rick & Monica Neff, New Horizons Home Video, Sandy O'Neill, Paradise Productions, Mark Pierson, Queen "B" Productions, Fred Olen Ray, Mike Vraney. **COVER ART:** Jack Pedota.

FEMME FATALES (ISSN 1062-3906) is published quarterly at 7240 W. Roosevelt Rd., Forest Park, IL 60130. (708) 366-5566. Editorial Offices: 5023 Frankford Ave., Baltimore, MD 21206. (301) 488-8147. Second class postage pending at Forest Park, IL 60130 & additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to FEMME FATALES, P.O. Box 270, Oak Park IL 60303. **Subscriptions:** Four Issues \$18. (*Foreign & Canada:* Four issues \$21.) Single copies when purchased from publisher: \$8. **Retail Distribution:** In the U.S. by Eastern News Distributors, 250 W. 55th St., New York, N.Y. 10019. (1-800-221-3148). In Great Britain by Titan Distributors, P.O. Box 250, London E3 4RT. Phone: (01) 980-6167. **Submissions** of artwork and articles are encouraged but must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Printed in USA. **Contents copyright** © 1992 by Frederick S. Clarke. **FEMME FATALES** (TM) is a proprietary Trademark.

ILLUSTRATION BY JEFFREY L. BROWN

LETTERS

MORE FEMMES ON FILM

Love the photos and articles. "Femmes on Films" is great, but it needs to be two or three more pages per issue. Hope to see you do profiles on Allison Hayes, Gloria Talbot, Linda Blair and, of course, my favorite—Adrienne Barbeau. Please—ten pages on Barbeau.

Hank Freitas
Santa Rosa, CA

[Due to lack of space, the movie review page was omitted from FF #2. But our readers have overwhelmingly insisted on the return of "Femmes on Film." And we're glad to comply—check out page 62. John Thonen interviewed Adrienne Barbeau for a profile that will appear in a future issue.]

STEAMED OVER SYBIL

Amongst the brain-dead mistakes and libelous disinformation:

"None of [Sybil] Danning's movies caught fire with the mainstream public, not even her breakthrough role... *L.A. BOUNTY*." This should stun both the mainstream public that remembers lining up at theatres for the multi-million dollar debut of *CHAINED HEAT* (which opened on the exact same weekend as *RETURN OF THE JEDI*) and ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT that on March 4, 1988 officially named her as nothing less than "The World's Number One Female Action Star?" Less than seven days before the opening of *ALIENS* back in July, 1986, *The Los Angeles Times* asks future Oscar contender Sigourney Weaver whether she wants to eventually become "the next Sybil Danning!"

"She had been rehearsing for an action film in which she played a professional wrestler." As the production company for the project to which this refers, we can report that the role has nothing to do with professional wrestling, misinformation probably created when the writer screwed up the facts: her trainer for the stunt work is/was a pro wrestler.

"...once she finally gets her wrestling movie ready... "There never has been anything even resembling a "wrestling movie." The movie itself (an urban action adventure titled *HIGH CALIBRE*) progresses into preproduction with her role recast and re-

written. Although it will go in association with *Adventuress* Productions (not the long-dissolved "Tremere" cited in another outdated fact), Danning has never been involved as one of its producers, only as one of its (now former) stars.

"Her appearance in a European import called *PRIVATE AFFAIRS* was typical for the actress... During the '70s." There is not and has never been any movie titled *PRIVATE AFFAIRS*, probably the writer's incorrect reference to *PRIVATE PASSIONS*—a Japanese-financed project which was filmed in July 1988 for release (after legal tangles) in early '89!

"*Playboy*... devoted 12 pages to the actress' robust physique." The *Playboy* cover clearly trumpets her ten-page layout.

"Her series of 26 Sybil Danning adventure videos backfired on the actress." Simple checking with any of the video shops in any neighborhood would have correctly identified *SYBIL DANNING'S ADVENTURE VIDEO*—a full-blown brand name instead of a misleading generic reference. Furthermore, that "backfire" has been profitable enough to incite the same *LIVE* Home Video which distributed those *ADVENTURE VIDEOS* to distribute *L.A. BOUNTY* two years after the series stopped.

"Her agent S. Dacy." S. C. Dacy never has been, is not now and never will be an "agent." He does function as her personal manager, and also as an executive consultant and producer within *Adventuress* Productions.

"Because *SCREWBALLS* was made in Canada, with Canadian actors, she was not involved." The real reason has far more to do with her shocking desire to be paid a fair wage for her work.

Danning's latest screen appearance—a walk-on in 1991's *PALE BLOOD*." Any professional who does minimal research can immediately recognize her "walk-on" as footage recycled from her own production *L.A. BOUNTY*.

"*Playboy* magazine selected Danning as 'Queen of the B's.'" The *Playboy* cover actually reads "Queen of the Action Flicks."

The truly offensive nature of this deliberately inferior feature shines through when it is compared with the transparent hype gifted to virtual unknowns in the rest of the edition...



Sybil Danning, as prostitute, tutors Nathalie Delon in the seldom-seen *BLUEBEARD* (1972).

Where one welcome decision to stop publishing cinema critiques written by starlets get nullified by a suspicious fan letter that praises one of those critiques...

Where (a) centerfold model appears semi-nude inside the front cover based on her own status as a critic's "favorite"—the critic who only mentions her as eleventh in a list of fourteen while he crowns Danning as Queen of an entire decade...

And where one starlet's reputation is artificially inflated by describing one of her credits as starring "a list of A-players"—for which the ensuing list deliberately forgets Danning herself, even though Danning portrays the title character!

S.C. Dacy
Los Angeles, CA

[We regret our errors. We don't agree with his characterization of the actresses covered in our pages as "virtual unknowns." Besides their film work, many are frequent guests on TV shows.]

MORE FEMMES JOURNALISTS

Here are some ideas for features that I would like to read in *Femme Fatales*:

An on-set report or production diary in each issue, for example Michelle Bauer on *DEMENTED*

or THE DWELLING.

A look at some of the movies that are either having trouble finding a distributor or have been little seen... like Linnea Quigley's *DIGGING UP BUSINESS*, Dave DeCoteau's *AMERICAN RAMPAGE* or Gary Graver's *NERDS OF A FEATHER*.

Finally, I do have an important question for you: why do I never get to read anything about one of the sassiest and most exciting B-Queens... namely Dawn Wildsmith? She was wonderful in Fred Olen Ray's *WARLORDS*, *TERMINAL FORCE* and *STAR SLAMMER*, not to mention *FUTURE FORCE* and *SURF NAZIS MUST DIE*.

Julian Grainger
Kent, England

[Michelle Bauer is writing a production diary on *LITTLE DEVILS*, a sexy black comedy with Suzanne Ager (see page 30) and *THREE'S COMPANY*'s Priscilla Barnes. Brinke Stevens is also developing a behind-the-scenes chronicle on her latest project, complete with personal interviews; but the producers have requested that we keep this one a surprise.

"Produced But Abandoned" is currently in preparation, an article devoted to films that are incomplete or were never released—and each featured your favorite actresses: read about what never happened to *BLOOD CHURCH*, *LADY VENGEANCE*, *SPACE SLUTS IN THE SLAMMER*, et al. A bio on Dawn Wildsmith, which documents her career and current activities, was also completed.]

GABRIELLE: MORE THAN A PRETTY WOMAN

I'm especially grateful for the articles on two of my favorite actresses, Monique Gabrielle and Caroline Munro [FF #2]. Recently, I joined the Gabrielle's fan club, expecting to receive a form letter like many other celebrity fan clubs. Much to my surprise, she promptly sent me a hand-written note thanking me for my interest. Somehow, I don't think I'd get that kind of reply if I had written to Julia Roberts or Meryl Streep. As far as I'm concerned, the actresses in your magazine are "A" movie queens in my book.

Richard Perry
Minneapolis, MN

FATALE

By Rachel Dane

OK, we reported on DRESSED FOR DARK in *Femme Fatales* #1, right? And weren't we all disappointed to open *Femme Fatales* #2 and learn there were no further developments? Production on the erotic vampire film, featuring an all-star cast of *femmes fatales*, has been postponed. But producer/director Dave DeCoteau insists the movie is very much alive. Brigitte Nielsen is slated to play a smolderingly sexy Contessa. And who will be engaged to play her bevy of bestial beauties? I personally assisted DeCoteau in a casting session, so I'll let you in on a little secret—the town's hottest actresses auditioned for various roles. No doubt DRESSED FOR DARK will have faithful *femme* watchers in a frenzy. I'll keep you posted on the supporting cast.

• Linnea Quigley (*Femme Fatales* 1:2), customarily dressed to kill, is opening a clothing shop in Los Angeles. "We're not carrying real leather or animal products," revealed Linnea, herself an animal activist. Check out her autobiography, *The Linnea Quigley Bio and Chainsaw Book*, available in softcover and illustrated with full-color photos; each copy is personally autographed. Cost is \$20, plus \$2 shipping. Order direct from Linnea at 13659 Victory Blvd., Suite 487, Van Nuys, CA 91408.

• RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD turned Quigley into a cult celebrity and genre icon. As a punker named "Trash" she stripped and tripped the light fantastic in a cemetery. Unfortunately, Trash perished in the movie, but it appears the character has been reincarnated. In

RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD III, a female gang member wreaks havoc... and turns even more uncivil after she's transformed into a zombie. Sound familiar? This time, however, the "bad girl" will be played by *Playboy* lingerie/catender model Pia Reyes. Will she reprise Quigley's boogaloo in a boneyard? Find out in *Femme Fatales* 1:4.

• It's a little premature to select the *Femme Fatales* film of 1993, but place your bets on EYES OF A STRANGER. The movie, directed by Sam Irvin, stars Linda Fiorentino and Nancy Allen. Fiorentino plays an actress, linked to scream queen roles, who's embroiled in murder. No doubt she consulted the supporting cast for research; watch for cameo appearances by Cassandra Peterson (a.k.a. Elvira), Mary Woronov (EATING RAOUL, HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD, et al.), and our own Brinke Stevens. Stevens, currently preoccupied with a comic book deal, is also writing a script. Unlike her earlier screenplay, TEENAGE EXORCIST, her current project is described by her as "scary. Pray it's only a movie."

• Monique Gabrielle (*Femme Fatales* 1:2) is preparing a chronicle of her life "on, and off, the movie screen." The book will be illustrated with "scorchy full-color photos." If you'd like to pitch some suggestions, or require further information, contact Gabrielle through her fan club: 4520 Van Nuys Blvd., #538, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403. Be sure to send a self-addressed stamped envelope.

• Brinke Stevens, Linnea Quigley, Wendy MacDonald and Monique Gabrielle were Joe Bob Briggs' special guests on "Joe Bob

Briggs' Drive-In Theatre." The actresses, individually interviewed during the month of October, were elected "Most Popular B-Queens" (voters included Movie Channel viewers, along with readers of *Femme Fatales* and Joe Bob's *We Are The Weird* newsletter). Joe Bob was so impressed with MacDonald's talents—if you know what we mean and we think you do—that she will be appearing on the show as "Cherry Dilday." Cherry, an avowed feminist, will be one of Joe Bob's drive-in dates.

• Jewel Shepard (HOLLYWOOD HOT TUBS I & II), who literally wrote the book on your favorite *femmes fatales*, has made a deal with Topps for a set of B-Queen trading cards. Shepard vows that photos, selected for her card set, "are not dated pick-ups, nor padded out with unknown starlets. No way. The B-Queens exclusively posed for the Topps trading cards, and they're photographed in fantasy scenarios that I personally organized." And which of the B-Queens stack the deck? Rumors have leaked that Monique Gabrielle, Linnea Quigley and Kelli Maroney are among the B-beauties included in the set. Incidentally, fans will want to brush up on Shepard's vinyl model kit. Released by Dark Horse Comics, she's sculpted in the raw—carrying a .45.

• *Femme Fatales* staffer Bruce G. Hallenbeck is preparing a remake of 1960's HORROR HOTEL. Beautiful Hammer veteran Veronica Carlson (*Femme Fatales* 1:1) is scheduled to play Elizabeth Selwyn, a sorceress toasted in Salem. Liz, obviously a career woman, returns from the dead to manage the hotel's "doom service." Debbie Rochon (DO YOU LIKE WOMEN?) is the likely candidate to play Nan, the college student who learns—too late—that "guests check in, but they don't check out."

• DRACULA WHO? is currently in development, with British and Irish locations selected for the black comedy. The screenwriter, Ingrid Pitt (interviewed this issue), is something of an authority on vampires. For details on Pitt's fan club, send a self-addressed stamp envelope to 47 Park Avenue, Rutherford, NJ 07070.

• Debra Lamb (STRIPPED TO KILL I & II, INVISIBLE MANIAC, EVIL SPIRITS et al.) has posed for "Starstruck," a very sexy pin-up calendar. Personalized autographed copies are available for \$20 each postpaid. Write to Lamb-Light Productions, 18633 Ventura Blvd., Suite 1240, Encino, CA



In HEXED, Claudia Christian plays a woman with a good sense of humor "who kills a lot."

91436.

• Claudia Christian, fondly remembered by genre fans for her debut role in THE HIDDEN (as the stripper possessed by an alien entity), is top-billed in HEXED. In the first feature film from Alan Spiner, creator of the SLEDGEHAMMER TV series, Christian is cast as a psychotic super model targeted for blackmail. The actress defines her character as a "woman with a good sense of humor who kills a lot. She's very eccentric and kind of sick, actually—a helluva broad. She's also clumsy." Christian, who also appeared in MANIAC COP II and ARENA, notes the film has its darker side. "It's a bit of a thriller. It's not just a screwball comedy à la AIRPLANE. I think it's a parody of all the women that have been portrayed recently in HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE and BASIC INSTINCT—this one has gone a thousand times crazier."

• Last issue, we reported that Robey (FRIDAY THE 13TH: THE SERIES) shot two different versions of the erotic thriller, PLAY NICE. In the version reserved for U.S. distribution, she was "protected" in a wet T-shirt. But Robey also shot sizzling footage—sans T-shirt—for a special European edition. Well, it turns out the European print was released direct to American video... and Robey is fightin' mad. She tells all in another *Femme Fatales* exclusive: check out issue #4.



Joe Bob Briggs and "the most popular" B-Queens: (l-r) Brinke Stevens, Linnea Quigley, Wendy MacDonald & Monique Gabrielle.

ELVIRA

PART II, TRACING THE YEARS 1981-1992; FROM HER BIRTH AS TV'S HOTTEST HORROR HOSTESS TO A POSSIBLE FUTURE AS SITCOM STAR.

BY DAN CZIRAKY



"I don't want to be Elvira when I'm 85 years old, with my cleavage dragging down to my knees," explained Cassandra Peterson.

Part One of our interview [FF No 2] with singer/dancer/comedienne Cassandra Peterson chronicled her youth in Colorado Springs, her introduction to show business as the youngest showgirl in Las Vegas history and her early attempts at an acting career. After several years of bit parts in film and television, Peterson's big break appeared imminent when she auditioned for the role of castaway Ginger Grant on a proposed revival of the GILLIGAN'S ISLAND TV series. Losing the part at the last minute, she decided to quit acting altogether.

The promise of fame and fortune for Cassandra Peterson wasn't to be found on an "unchartered desert isle" at the end of a "three hour tour." Bitterly disappointed with her rejection as Ginger and on the verge of entering the world of advertising sales, a phone call served as the catalyst for a new chapter in Peterson's life.

"About two weeks before my cut-off date (to quit acting), I got a call from a girl-friend who said, 'I have a friend who's a director at a TV station. They're looking for a horror hostess. He described what he wanted, and you'd be perfect!' She said they wanted a sexy woman with big boobs, but they wanted her to be comedic too, because the director was a real funny guy and he liked to write jokes. My friend said, 'I told him I knew the perfect person. You should

go in and audition.'

"I was a fan of Edward D. Wood and Hammer movies. I've always been a huge B-movie fan—horror movies, biker movies and prison movies—I really loved them. My friends and I had a little film society called Le Chien, which translates from French as The Dog. We'd see bad movies of any type. So I was really a good person for the job because if they had gotten someone who wasn't into watching those kinds of films, they would have lost their minds within six months—for sure."

Peterson auditioned for the position of KHJ-TV's horror hostess, "as myself," in late August of 1981 and won the role. "After I got the part they told me I'd have to come up with something spooky look-



Elvira's flirtatious charm has crossed into mainstream merchandising, prompting the sale of records, comic books and pinball machines.



Future plans for Elvira include a TV series. But a sequel to her debut film, 1988's *ELVIRA, MISTRESS OF THE DARK*, is a top priority.

ing, of course—spookier than I looked in real life, which is pretty spooky," she recounted. "I have a friend who's artist and he drew up a picture for me." Peterson and makeup artist/costume designer Robert Redding's initial attempt to create her on-camera persona was different from the more familiar manifestation of Elvira.

"The first design was more along the lines of Sharon Tate in *THE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS*, one of my favorite movies. I loved Sharon Tate in it. I had long, curly red hair, very pale features, more like a dead person than a vampire, and my eyes hollowed out with dark circles. It had a sort of sheer, see-through tattered negligee," the actress remembered. "They didn't like it at all. They said, 'If you're going to be scary you have to have black hair and a black dress.' We thought, 'Eeyew, that's so typical.' So my friend drew up a new picture, an '80s version of what they wanted. We added some leather and metal studs and a hairdo borrowed from the Ronettes from the '60s called the Knowledge Bump. It started out real flat, but Robert kept ratting it out until my hair was taller than I am—I looked like a Conehead! It's finally calmed down."

By mid-September of 1981, Peterson was taping her first *MOVIE MACABRE* programs in front of KHJ-TV cameras. Draped across a red Victorian sofa, on a set decorated to resemble a "haunted house garage sale," the Elvira character introduced schlock horror films and grade-Z sci-fi flicks. Drawing upon her comedy training, Peterson peppered the show with satiric put-downs and *double entendres*, often amazed herself with how much risqué material she got away with.

On May 23, 1982, Elvira hosted a special KHJ-TV screening of *THE MAD MAGICIAN* (1954), a 3-D thriller starring Vincent Price. The movie—and Elvira's wraparound segments—were broadcast in 3-D, a television first. Over 2.7 million pairs of 3-D glasses were sold in L.A.



ELVIRA, MISTRESS OF THE DARK was no stranger to glitter; her alter ego, Cassandra Peterson, is a former Vegas showgirl.

This event springboarded the character's appeal, and was followed by Elvira's first appearance on **THE TONIGHT SHOW** a week later. Rhino Records released her first single, "3-D Tonight," further cementing her celebrity.

"At first I was only local, but we finally got a syndication deal," recalled the personable beauty. "The syndicator went out and sold it state-by-state. It seemed to spread slowly east from California, and it didn't reach the East Coast until the very end. I never did get into New York City, but a Buffalo station aired it, so it could be picked up on dishes or cable. At one time I was asked to go to Tower Records near Times Square to sign something—I think it was my Halloween album. I was so afraid it was going to be like a scene out of **THIS IS SPINAL TAP**, where only one person would come up and ask for my autograph. It was amazing—there were so many people there, I couldn't believe it. They had

policemen on horseback, and they set up barricades to keep the line back, and the line went on for blocks. It was really, really incredible. That's how I knew that somehow, they were getting me in New York."

It took several years of promoting the buxom belle before her appeal reached national proportions. As early as 1982, Peterson's Elvira alter ego premiered on network prime time, appearing on **CHiPS** and other shows. She debuted Elvira's stage act at Knott's Berry Farm in October 1982, which has turned into an annual event, drawing as many as 80,000 attendants. To top off that year, she earned an Emmy nomination for "Best Local Program."

By 1985, Elvira had moved into the arena of home video, hosting **LIVE Entertainment's THRILLER THEATRE**. "They showed me a big ol' slew of movies I could choose from, and I picked the ones that were most related to Elvira—they were campy, B-

flavored, and you could make fun of them," laughed Peterson. The collection included feature-length episodes of the British **HOUSE OF HAMMER** television series, and Dan Curtis' made-for-TV adaptations of horror classics. A few **THRILLER THEATRE** titles, such as the notoriously violent **MAKE THEM DIE SLOWLY** (1982), were released without the Elvira wraparounds. "Occasionally, there will be a movie with really horrible scenes with animals," Peterson explained. "I declined to do those. I don't really do slasher movies. There's a fine line between slasher and fantasy movies. I love the **NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET** movies. To me, that's not a slasher movie, that's a total fantasy. A lot of people have said to me, 'It's another guy trying to kill women,' but it's not."

As Elvira's popularity further expanded, the volume of tie-in merchandise increased. Collegeville/Imagining L.P. introduced the

Elvira Halloween Costume in 1985, and it quickly became the best-selling costume in the U.S. Coors Beer signed the macabre madam in 1987 for Halloween-themed commercials, making Peterson the first female celebrity to endorse a beer product.

Besides her early Italian film work, and a role in 1973's **THE WORKING GIRLS** (directed by Roger Corman

Peterson was "cut out" of **ALLAN QUATERMAIN AND THE LOST CITY OF GOLD**; "I was the villain."





Elvira poses by her '58 Thunderbird. The vehicle was replicated as a model kit (Elvira not included).

protege Stephanie Rothman), Peterson made appearances —sans Elvira makeup—in such films as *STROKER ACE* (1988), *BORN IN EAST L.A.* (1985) and *ECHOPARK* (1986). "I just do these little cameo things; I really don't do things as myself," Peterson admitted. "It's not monetarily conducive for me to go out and do something as Cassandra, and I'm only paid scale. I waste all this time, when I could be working as Elvira and make in one day what I'd make in a month working as Cassandra. I can't stop my regular career. Hopefully, someday I'll be able to do things that are fun, even if they don't pay a lot of money. That would be really nice."

Groundlings pal Paul Reubens asked her to do a cameo as a "biker mama" in *PEEWEE'S BIG ADVENTURE* (1985), the first full-length feature directed by Tim Burton (BATMAN). "That was a memorable film moment," laughed Peterson. "That was a great movie. Audiences either absolutely love it, or it's like fingernails on a chalkboard."

Inevitably, a movie vehicle was tailored for the tube's sultry temptress. 1988's *ELVIRA, MISTRESS OF THE DARK* was co-produced by Peterson's Queen B Productions and the feature film division of NBC Productions. Released domestically by New World Pictures during the ultra-competitive summer movie season, the film fell victim to the distributor's financial troubles. As it turned out, *ELVIRA* was the last film released by New World before the studio closed its doors. The movie did much better on home video, climbing to Number 12 on *Billboard's* Video Rental Charts.

ELVIRA's overseas release sent Peterson on a whirlwind promotional tour to England, Spain and Japan. Concurrently, the first 20 installments of the syndicated *THRILLER THEATRE* series debuted on Australia's Network 10, grabbing 50% share of the Aussie audience. In Great Britain, the BBC

P E T E R S O N

"My girlfriend said, 'They're looking for a horror hostess.' They wanted a sexy woman, with big boobs, to be comedic."



The Fantasy Cinema is no longer a man's world, veterans Vincent Price and John Astin make room for the Mistress of the Dark.

aired the six-part *HEAVY METAL HEAVEN* series, hosted by Elvira.

Merchandising tie-ins continued to flourish. "'Evil' was a huge seller," said Peterson of the Elvira-endorsed perfume that became available in 1990. "Unfortunately the company went bankrupt—not because of my perfumes, I hope! But in the year, year and a half it was out, it did really well." The perfume also has the unique distinction of being the first product to bear the "Cruelty-Free" symbol of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals). A longtime animal rights activist, Peterson won PETA's Humanitarian Award in 1990.

That same year, Rhino Home Video launched *MIDNIGHT MADNESS*, with Elvira serving as hostess to the likes of *THE HIDEOUS SUN DEMON* (1959), *THE BRAIN FROM PLANET AROUS* (1957) and 1961's *THE MASK* (released to video in the 3-D optical process, with glasses sealed in each carton). Scenes of Elvira, intercut within scenes of the

movie raised the ire of cinema purists. Rhino dropped Elvira's "intrusive cutaways" and reissued the films with "Uncut, Uninterrupted" labels on the video packages.

Peterson celebrated her 10th anniversary as America's "Glamour Ghoul" in 1991. After a two-year stint as "Spokesperson" for Mug Root Beer, Elvira was resigned by Coors Beer for commercials pitching the Halloween party circuit. But the year's highlight was most likely the Knott's Berry Farm live show, "Truth or Scare," which parodied Madonna's *TRUTH OR DARE* documentary.

"I did Madonna songs and changed the lyrics to spooky lyrics," Peterson said. "Like 'Vogue' was 'Morgue,' and everybody was on gurneys. 'C'mon, Morgue, let your body journey on the gurney,' with everyone dressed as blood-splattered surgeons and corpses laying around. We made our own six-minute, black-and-white version of *TRUTH OR DARE* and it turned out to be quite funny. Featured in the short film was a satirical re-enactment of the

interplay between Madonna and Kevin Costner, with Richard Chamberlain playing the subject of Elvira's disdain. "I asked him to do it and he did it," said Peterson. "He's really sweet. He didn't get paid much money, I'll tell you that!"

Chamberlain and Peterson have known each other since working together on *ALLAN QUATERMAIN AND THE LOST CITY OF GOLD* (1987). "I tended up getting cut out of the picture," she recalled. "They still use my picture to sell it, but I look like an extra. I'm just standing in the back. When the movie first started, I was the villain. The film was confiscated in Zimbabwe and the parts that originally featured me had to be reshot in Hollywood, but I was unavailable because it was Halloween. I had contracts—all the stuff I do at Halloween is booked far in advance—and I couldn't leave to reshoot the movie, so they replaced me with somebody else. It's so embarrassing because people probably see the movie and think, 'She must not be able to deliver lines, because they don't have her saying anything.'" In fact, Peterson had to turn down the role of Ms Muso on Fox TV's *PARKER LEWIS CAN'T LOSE* because of conflicts with her Elvira-related work.

continued on page 60

Peterson, an animal activist, spoofs fur ads in a photo that earned an award from PETA.



KATHY ireland

THE SUPERMODEL, LINKED TO SCIENCE FICTION
ROLES, WANTS TO SHOW MORE THAN HER PHYSIQUE.

BY STEVE BIODROWSKI



Ireland strips down to a string bikini for DANGER, SLAND a scene that was censored at least 4 times during the film's broadcast.

She's not just a supermodel anymore. Earlier this year, her trim physique surfaced on Budweiser ads. Beneath her photo-copied signature was a revised old description: ACTRESS SUPERMODEL.

Kathy Ireland has been known to millions of *Sports Illustrated* readers as cover girl of the swimsuit issue. But a predilection for drama actually preceded her career as a model. "Acting's something I've been interested in since I was a kid," she recalled. "I used to do plays in school and theatre workshops in the summer, but I never really thought about it as a career. I fell into modeling by accident. It seemed as I got more successful that I started getting acting opportunities, so I started studying again and decided to give the opportunities a chance."

Ireland was granted her initial opportunity in *AI IEN FROM L.A.*, a leading lady though she now regards the 1983 release as an education. "The movie was sort of a combination of science fiction and Ireland admitted. "The budget was very low, which is apparent when you see it, but it was a really good experience for me. All I had done in the past were plays, which is entirely different from film, so the technical part was new to me. I learned a lot."

Aside from one comedy (1991's *NECESSARY ROUGHNESS*) and a fantasy (1990's *MR. DESTINY*), Ireland's subsequent work has been conspicuously in the minor sci-fi camp: *MOM AND DAD SAVE THE WORLD* and the mad-for-TV *DANGER, SLAND* (both 1992). But it was not necessarily the genre busters that drew her to these projects. Her role as Semage, one of *Plan 9*, Spengos slow-witted rebels in *MOM AND DAD*, provided a pay-off as a result of the comic possibilities. "I was reading on the [TV] listings, when I read the script—I thought it was hysterical," she smiled. "Playing an alien on a

planet of idiots wasn't really something I was looking for, but I loved the story and it was a chance to work with some great people. Everybody brought a lot to it, so it was even funnier when we got down to shooting. I think Greg Bear [now] is the perfect director for that film, because he seems to be like a child at heart. He's very in tune with what works, what's funny, and he gets so excited by the science fiction nature of it, that he was like a little kid looking around his sets. We'd do long hours and night shoots, which is to be expected on a film, but it was fun as a day-to-day experience, working with everyone."

The comic context of her role notwithstanding, one contemplates why the model/actress turned Bushie chick is a character actress—agreed to play one of Spengos slow-witted rebels. "I thought they [the Spengos rebels] are idiots, I think Semage is a tad smarter than the others," Ireland explained, "—just a tad, which is a really saying not much, but at least she had a bit of an edge to her. We didn't really wear that much, which was a drag. But that's what they wear on this



Ireland as Sernage,
one of Planet
Spengo's rebels in
**MOM AND DAD SAVE
THE WORLD** "Playing
an alien on a planet
of idiots, wasn't
something I was
looking for. But I
loved the story."

planet of idiots

Part of the project's appeal was the opportunity to work with Jeffrey Jones, who plays Dick Nelson, the Dad of the title. Many of the film's funnier moments derive from his put-upon protagonist's communication with the rebels, who interpret his simple, common sense advice as profound wisdom. "It was challenging," Ireland laughed as she reflected upon her awe struck reactions to the ordinary Earthman. "Jeffrey Jones is actually somebody whose work I had admired for a long time. He's such a good actor. It's a compliment to him that he's nothing like Dick—that was pure acting. In fact, I had just seen him in *VALMONT* and I was having a hard time imagining him as Dick, but he was really great."

Despite the ambitious schedule, restricted budget, and extensive special effects, Ireland noted only one particular hardship during production—which she was fortunate enough to avoid. "I lucked out," she noted. "I didn't have to eat the hot spiced lub-dub which is the delicacy of Spengo. A lot of the actors and extras had to eat it, and it didn't look too appetizing."

From the Planet Spengo, Ireland next moved to *DANGER ISLAND*. Originally titled *THE ISLAND*, the NBC movie, broadcast in September, served as a two-hour pilot for a proposed television series. The premise involved survivors of a plane crash who are washed ashore on an uncharted island. Deceptively appearing as a paradise, the location is actually a breeding ground for mutants and monsters—the result of CIA

IRELAND

DANGER ISLAND's science fiction and special effects are there, but they don't overshadow the reality.



Ireland describes her debut film, *THE ALIEN FROM L.A.*, as "a sort of children's science fiction show."

experimentation with biological warfare. "Television was something that I was hoping to be involved with, if I found the right show," she explained. "There's a lot of television that I don't care for, but this is such a different kind of concept that possibilities are pretty incredible. There's nothing else out there like it."

It's been promised that *DANGER ISLAND* won't be a monster-of-the-week show. Character interaction and survival are supposed to be stressed. "The science fiction and special effects are there, but they don't overshadow the reality," confirmed Ireland. "It all sounds outrageous, but it's all quite probable when you get down to it—this type of stuff could happen." Once again, she denied the SF element attracted her to the show. "It didn't originally, no, although I do enjoy this type of film. It's very different, but it may be along the lines of *STAR TREK*, where there are real people and stories that are meaningful, yet these bizarre things happen."

"We all brought a lot of ourselves to the characters," she continued. "The character I play, Laura Daniels, is a model. She's been doing it for awhile, but she doesn't really like it—she's not very fulfilled by it. She's doing a shoot on a tropical island and a revolution takes place, so she's forced to escape on a plane

that eventually crashes with 11 other people. It's her chance to start over. She says she's a CEO when they ask what she does. She's a little bit embarrassed about being a model, and she's decided she doesn't want to do it anymore."

Are there any parallels between the character and real life? "Maybe just a little," laughed Ireland. "No, I've been modeling for the past 12 years. For me, it's been great. It's given me a lot of opportunities, like a chance to see the world, including places I'd never heard of before, and the opportunity to say money, so I could have the luxury of taking my time and doing other things. One thing is being able to be more particular about the roles I choose as an actor. If I needed the money, I'd have to take every job that came my way. So I feel grateful for that. At the same time it's a really superficial business. That's one of the things I've always had a difficult time with. I think, when you get into it, you just know it's something you're going to do for a short time. You have to be aware of that, because I don't think it's healthy to stay in it too long."

Ireland and the rest of the cast won't know whether *DANGER ISLAND* will be picked up as a series until December. Meanwhile, she is continuing her career as an actress. "I'm enjoying it. I still do a bit of modeling here and there, but I'm concentrating on acting. I've been fortunate so far. I've been able to work with some great people, and the modeling has allowed me to pick and choose which projects I want to work on."

Despite her genre credits, Ireland's real interest is in comedy (she cites Lucille Ball and Steve Martin as two of her favorite performers); however, as her role in *DANGER ISLAND* suggests, she is also interested in expanding her range. "I love comedy—it's a nice atmosphere to work in, as well as being a lot of fun and really challenging—but if I had my choice, I'd like to play a variety of characters. Last year, I worked on *NECESSARY ROUGHNESS*. I liked doing that, because I got to play a placekicker on an all-men's college football team. Normally, they would have offered me parts like a cheerleader. That was a lot of fun. I got to learn to play and I really enjoyed the character—she was a strong, tough person, not to mention a world-class athlete. Characters are what I really love doing."

Ireland played a placekicker in *NECESSARY ROUGHNESS*. "Normally, they offer me parts like a cheerleader."





Ireland, as a bikini model, foreshadows her DANGER ISLAND encounter with "pulsating, mutant fruit."

THE BRIDES OF BRAM STOKER'S

THEY'RE EXOTIC, EROTIC ...

BY STEVE BIODROWSK

The undead trio of women who share Dracula's castle in the Stoker novel, have been interpreted in a variety of ways—from the spectral-like wraiths of Universal to the voluptuous vixens of Hammer. The title of the Count's latest incarnation, *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*, is indicative of the film's fidelity to its literary source. Further adhering to the book, director Francis Ford Coppola—for the first time in the classic's translation to the screen—has cast authentically European actresses to play Dracula's vampire brides...

Florina Kendrick, a native of Rumama, has actually appeared on stage in Transylvania. Two years ago, she relocated in Los Angeles to pursue an acting career.

Half Romanian and half Hungarian *Michaela Bercu* was born and raised in Israel. At age 16, she was invited by *Vogue* magazine to move to Manhattan, where she has worked as a model for three years.

Monica Bellucci continues

to reside in her native Italy, where she returned immediately after completing her role, making her unavailable for comment.

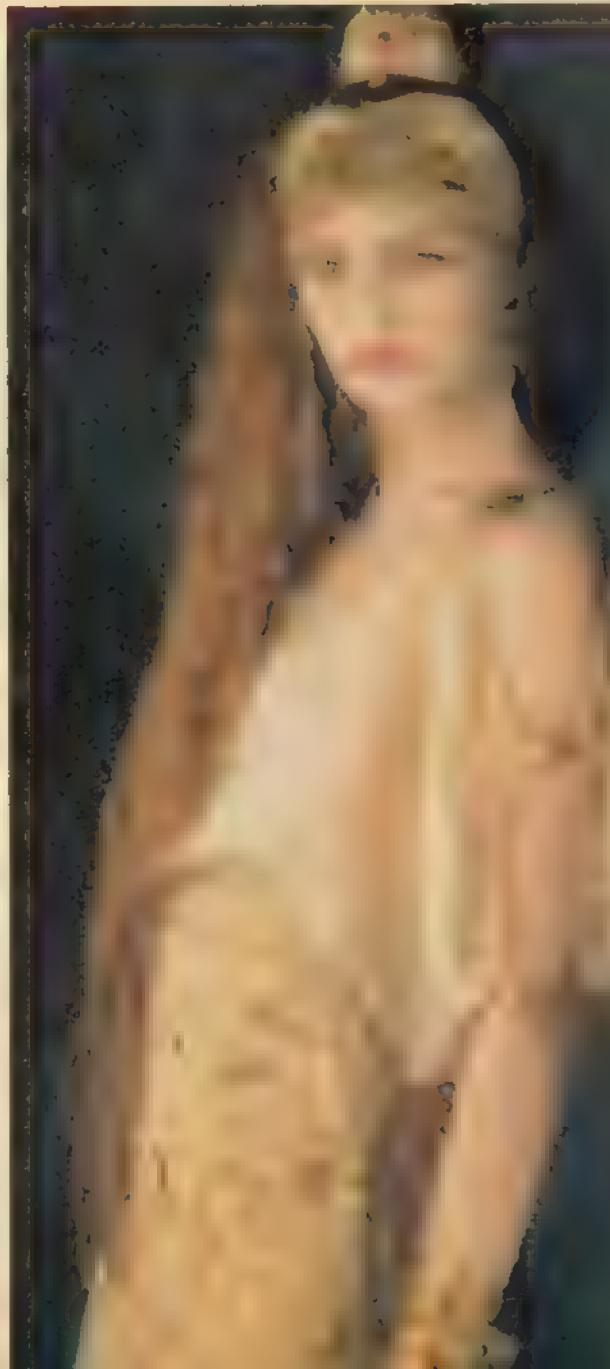
BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA marks their first appearance in a major feature. "I never did any acting before," admitted Bercu. "This was my first time and it was a wonderful surprise. I had been thinking about acting, and I had started to take some classes, but this came out of nowhere, like a present for me. They were searching around LA, and went to modeling agencies, including my agency. Francis liked my picture. The next thing I knew, I was sent to do a screen test with the casting director. Then one day at nine o'clock, my agency called and told me to be in LA at six o'clock the next morning to meet with Mr. Coppola."

Kendrick was a bit more active in seeking the role. "It was difficult, but I have fond memories of it," she related. "I heard about the project when my manager called me about it, and other people mentioned it. I decided I really wanted to try for it. I felt I had so much to say on this subject."

Kendrick met Coppola last October, during the first week of shooting, and found that her native language was helpful.



Michaela Bercu, Florina Kendrick and Monica Bellucci as Dracula's 'brides.'



THE BRIDES OF DRACULA

BY STEVE BIDWOROW

BRAM STOKER'S

THEY'RE EXOTIC, EROTIC... AND AUTHENTIALLY EUROPEAN.

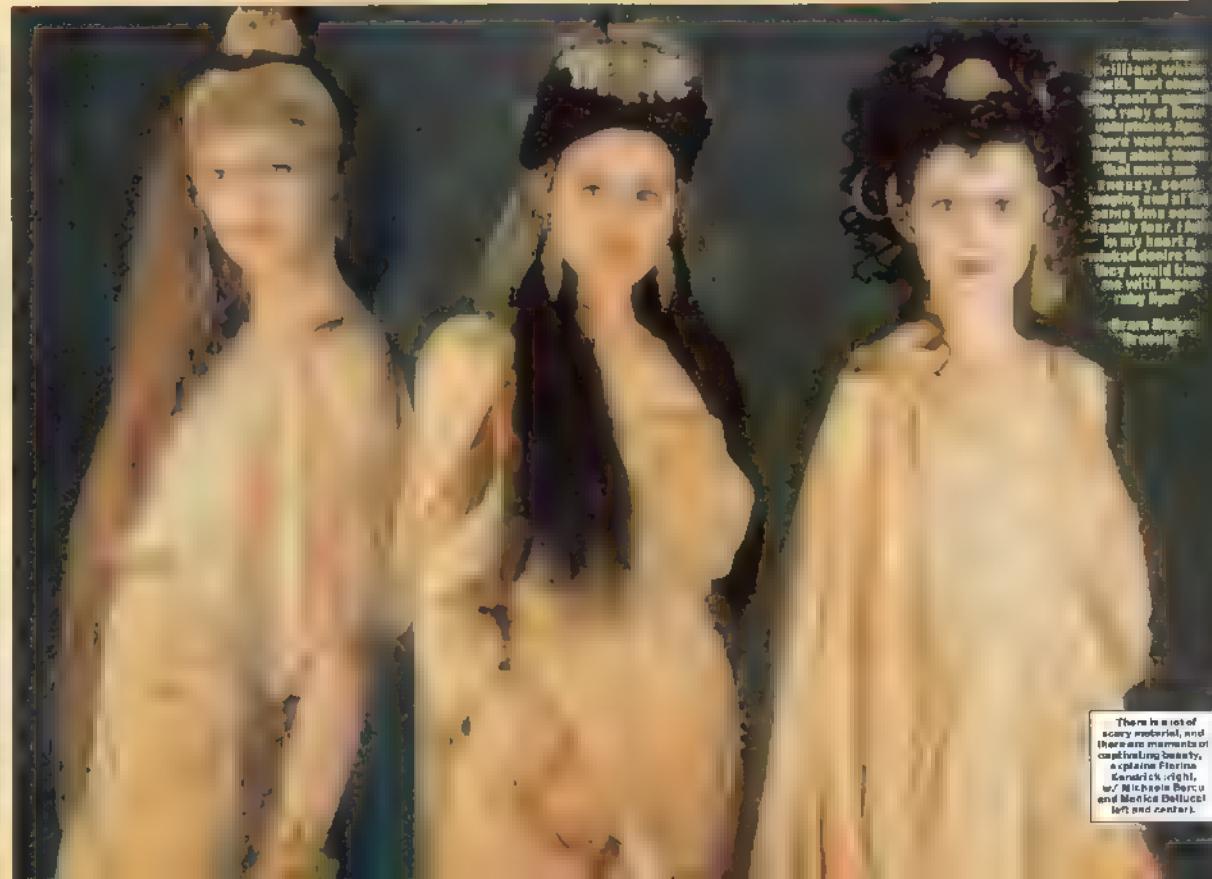
The indomitable women who face Dracula's ways in the Stoker novel have been re-created in a sultry, sexy, and thoroughly exoticized version. In voluptuous bodies of Flora, Fifi, and Melicia, *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA* is a mixture of desire and death that's as spine-tingly as anything in a book by the late James F. O'Rourke. But the author of this regeneration of the immortal has taken her legal, European addresses to polygamy, vampires, and more.

Flora Kendrik, a blonde of 38, is a natural suspenseful on stage in Transylvania. Two men go after her, and all she has to do is choose a dracula.

Melicia Belucci and *Flora Kendrik* as *Mina Harker* and *Elisabeth* in *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*. Mina Harker was a virgin when she first met Dracula, but Elisabeth, who may have been a widow, had been a widow for years.

More... Below and right

Michaela Bercu, Flora Kendrik, and Melicia Belucci as Dracula's brides.



There is not of scary material, and these instruments of capitalism beauty, a blonde Flora Kendrik, right, w/ Michaela Bercu left and center).

DRACULA

AND AUTHENTICALLY EUROPEAN.



"I saw their brilliant white teeth, that shone like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips. There was something about them that made me uneasy, something longing and at the same time something deadly fear. I felt in my heart a wicked desire that they would kiss me with those ruby lips!"

Drakula
"Dracula"
1931

"There is a lot of scary material, and there are moments of captivating beauty," explains Flóra Kendrick (right, w/ Michaela Bercu and Monica Bellucci, left and center).



Director Francis Ford Coppola and the brides. "Francis," recalled Michaela Bercu (center), "tried to give each one of us the part of the bride we fit. They have to be sensual and sexual—you don't know when they can bite you."

ful in landing a job on the film "While I was auditioning, the casting director told me the production was looking for a Rumanian coach, in case I was interested. I said, 'Yes, why not? It's my language.' So while I was still going through the tests for the part, I started coaching Gary Oldman, Anthony Hopkins and Winona Ryder.

"The most lines in Rumanian are Gary's," she continued. "He's a very hard-working actor, extremely dedicated to what he's doing. I was impressed to see him preparing and getting everything right. Gary and Anthony ended up speaking with pronounced Transylvanian accents. Since I have a Transylvanian accent, I felt it would be interesting to hear some words pronounced in the dialect. Anthony said that he learned the lines like music—he would listen to me and then remember the music of the line. I was never aware that Rumanian is such a musical language."

Bercu, because of her European heritage, also had no problem with the language. "That part was easy for me, because I grew up speaking Rumanian at home," she explained. "When they picked me for the part, they did not know this. They said, 'You'll have a hard job—you'll have to speak Rumanian.' 'Actually,' I said, 'Rumanian is easier for me than English!'" When I told my parents about speaking Rumanian, my father was very proud—because he's my Rumanian side—that I had studied the language.

According to Kendrick, the auditioning process that continued after she became dialogue coach was to determine "acting ability, not so much in words as in gestures—because vampires look human but they have non-human qualities so you have to express that ethereal feeling somehow. They certainly spent time searching for the right actresses. They also wanted different looks."

Stoker described the appearance of two of Dracula's female consorts as dark, the other, apparently a favored mistress, is blonde and fair. Kendrick and Bellucci took the former roles, Bercu the latter one. "In my case, they were looking for a blonde girl, European and exotic," she explained of her casting. "Francis, by looking at us, tried to give each one of us the part of the bride we fit. I was the youngest bride—a bit more romantic. We liked how the brides were working together but each one had her own personality. They have to be sensual and sexual. On the other hand, you don't know when they can bite you. So they're very mysterious in their way."

"I'm the dominatrix," Kendrick laughingly described her role. "I'm the mature bride, the Medusa, the mythical character who turns you to stone. I think it was a demanding part—she had this intensity and coldness about her, yet she had to be a master of

seduction. That's what vampires are the essence of seduction. They live on blood, and the only way they can get it is by seducing people, so they have to be attractive, beautiful creatures."

"We tried to develop our characters in different ways," she added. "Michaela—the youngest, cute, playful bride—is the favorite right now. Of course, I was the first, so I think I should be the favorite. There's always this fight. Everyone thinks she should have more rights than the others. On the other hand, we are like one body. I like playing these opposites—it creates dramatic tension. One interesting thing about this film is it has a lot of opposites. There is a lot of scary material, and there are moments captivating with their beauty."

Although all wore the same basic makeup—sharp fingernails, pale complexion, and purple eyes—each bride was distinguished by her costume and hairstyle. "I needed to have hair extensions," Bercu

said of her character's appearance. "Sometimes it took three hours, because they wanted my hair to be wavy. We needed to do 200 or 300 braids, steam them and open them. Then we found the trick, which was to do the braids at night, so I'd have the waves in the morning."

Kendrick wore an even more remarkable hairstyle, which resembled coiling serpents. "Just for that particular effect, I had to spend two hours every day in the hair trailer," she recalled. "At one point, I had real snakes. Every time I think of that, I don't know how I did it. I had about 15 real king snakes of different sizes and colors—beautiful colors: brown, red and yellow. I worked with them a couple of days in advance, so I could get comfortable with them—although I don't know if you ever really get comfortable with snakes! When the scene came, they started loading these snakes in my curls, which were made to look like snakes. They let the snakes catch a curl. Then once they caught on, they wouldn't fall. They kept putting more on until at one point I said, 'No more—it's loaded!'

"When we started shooting, my head had a life of its own. I tried to be in tune with it. Honestly, I understand why they are symbols of sensuality. At the beginning, they might be frightening, but then they are so smooth and gentle, and they move so slowly, that you cannot but be captivated. I really believe that what terrifies us also captivates us. It's the same with *Dracula* as with the snakes I started liking them."

The snakes are only one of many hallucinatory effects which occur during the brides' attempted seduction of Jonathan Harker (Keanu Reeves)—a memorable scene in the novel which has been augmented and even further eroticized for the film. "To me, it seems like we shot a little movie within a movie—that scene took a long time to shoot, because it was supposed to be weird," stated Kendrick, who had to float down from the rafters on a trapeze bar while her cohorts

"Vampires live on blood, and the only way they can get it is by seducing people, so they have to be attractive, beautiful creatures."



The brides feast upon Jonathan Harker (Keanu Reeves). "Vampires are the essence of seduction," explains Florina Kendrick (left).

rose up from the floor through a trap door. Bercu also had her share of effects, whether it was prosthetics or a set which tilted on its side, allowing her to cling to the wall like a fly. "I had to do a special effect where I bit into a nipple—lots of blood comes out on my face, and I have to drink it," she related. "I had to climb on the wall after *Dracula* throws me. For me, it was unbelievable. For me everything was like a special effect, because I had never been on a movie set before. The first day, when I went to meet Francis, I was walking with my mouth open—I could not believe that the sets looked so real."

The technical effects were important for providing a sense of the unexpected but the main challenge was to achieve the sensuous quality of the scene. "I thought it would be more difficult than it was," said Kendrick. "I think it's due to Francis' quality of giving all the support, warmth and comfort an actor needs to go out and reach for the farthest point—and this part really implied going out and reaching. He definitely has a very special quality."

Words are not so much the medium through which he communicates to actors; it's the confidence and creativity which has been established between him and all the people working on the film. It's a very inspiring atmosphere to be around."

With their European backgrounds, Bercu and Kendrick compared the fictional Transylvanian Count to the real life Wallachian Voivod from whom Stoker took the name *Dracula*. "In every country, you read stories and see films about *Dracula*," Bercu confirmed. "When you're a kid you laugh and play about it late at night—that *Dracula* would come and capture you if you walked in the woods. I think it's a story that every nation knows."

Even natives of Transylvania are aware of Stoker's creation, but as Kendrick informed us, "It's not the focus of their attention. They know more about Vlad Tepes (i.e., the 'Impaler') and his tremendous intelligence and capacity to fight. He seems to be one of the leading figures in history. Obviously he was cruel by our standards. There have

been so many books written about him, but that's not really the point—it doesn't make sense to go into a lot of details. Because he had to defend a small land against a big empire, he had to attract attention and build respect in some way—which he apparently did, because there are stories about him in all languages of that part of Europe."

Both young actresses are elated with their participation in the most expensive production (\$40 million) ever mounted for the horror classic. "I thought the script was wonderful," Bercu avowed. "What was different was that it was exactly like the Bram Stoker book. All the *DRACULA* pictures I had seen were not exactly like the book. It was very exciting for me to work with a big director like Francis Ford Coppola—just to be on the set was an experience. I never thought in my best dreams that something like that could happen to me."

"It's so hard for me to quiet down this part," Kendrick enthused. "Someone once said that, as an actor, you probably do two or three parts in your life to which you really relate deeply. I think this might be one in my life, maybe because it originates in Transylvania, but also because

continued on page 60

"The brides," explained Florina Kendrick, "are the most intense sensual creatures."



THERE'S **NOTHING**

IT'S THE "BAD" VS. THE "BIKINI-CLAD" IN A

BY AL RYAN & DAN CZIRAKY



You would have thought the reviewers were lauding a John Sayles or Petey Marshall movie. *E. I. Times* critic Kevin Thomas known to some of his "victims" as the Prince of Pan described the film as "fast and funny." Janet Maslin, in her *New York Times* review indicated them via screenwriter showed energy and promise. All of the praise was lavished upon **THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE**, a mini-budgeted lampoon of the rip-offs and sequels spawned by **FRIDAY THE 13TH** and **HALLOWEEN** (see review on page 62).

"I was really never a big horror fan," admitted **NOTHING** writer/director Roll Kanefsky "so I started to watch a lot of the tapes. As I watched them, I realized how many *bad* films there were. Kanefsky doesn't belabor his satire with a self-conscious streak (contrast with the leaden gags in **STUDENT BODY**, **THE WICKED**, et al.) The in-jokes are delivered at a rapid pace, courtesy of the director's dad, Victor Kanefsky. The 'elder' Kanef-

The fetching Bonnie Bowers rehearses a scene with the alien menace (below).

sky, **NOTHING**'s editor and producer, accumulated over 35 years of experience as a documentary editor.

Like its inexpensive targets **NOTHING** leaped from its conceptual stage to actual production. "I was in high school," recounted the director, "and I had a week free, so I decided to work on a horror script. I wrote the first draft in five days. The movie, in total, was a five-week shoot." The film was photographed in New Jersey, not far from the locations where **FRIDAY THE 13TH** (Parts I and II) were shot. Kanefsky learned to economize on a budget that was hardly as frugal with his imagination. *New York Daily News* critic, the Phantom of the Movies, compared the film's pre-credit sequence—where a teenage girl (Lisa Grant) is stalked in a video store to Clive Barker's short story, "Son of Celluloid."

The Phantom also noted the film was "well acted." As befits most trendy teens-in-the-woods horror movies, **NOTHING** offers a cast of young ingenues in peril. Wendy Bednar plays Doreen, the stereotypical perky blonde girl friend of one stereotypical jock. She lathers up in the film's obligatory shower sequence. The camera voyeuristically closes in on Bednar's naked physique but taunts

OUT THERE

CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED HORROR SPOOF.

the audience by denying them the critical T&A shots. "I did that on purpose," Kanefsky gleefully admitted. "I thought that whole tease aspect was great. You think you're going to see something, and you don't." Bednarz has subsequently appeared in another horror spoof, *VAMPIRES AND OTHER STEREOTYPES* and is preparing to seat herself in the director's chair. "Wendy is very intelligent, very good to work with," Kanefsky related. "She took an NYU film course and she's excited about directing a half hour film."

Gratuitous nudity is indispensable to horror-exploitation entertainment, and *NOTHING*'s nudity quota is equally gratuitous. "It was mostly for laughs," explained Kanefsky. "The T&A was a big part of the film, but with comedy elements." Adhering to her professional background, bikini model Bonnie Bowers frequently performs in—and sometimes out of—a string bikini. "When we started off, Bonnie was fine," explained the director. "About a week into production, all the trouble started. We had a sex scene which we were about four days into. She sort of objected to it, and she felt uncomfortable, but she did it. We had a shot where she and John Carhart III got into bed, and we told him not to take off his underwear because we wouldn't see him in the scene. Then she comes down and she was like, 'How come he's still in his underwear? What's wrong?' It was a long day, I was tired and I said, 'Yeah, Bonnie, we're spending \$600 grand just to see you naked.' After that, she wanted to get off the film and was talking to



Wendy Bednarz, one of *NOTHING*'s leading ladies, poses for the film's initial ad campaign.

her lawyer. She thought movie making was having your own star on your door, along with your own personal trailer and chair. But, to her credit, Bonnie's character is the most *dimensional* of the group...not just because she looks great in a bikini, but because she evolves from a passive presence into a take-charge, Sigourney Weaver-type of tigress. Bowers was most recently seen on Howard Stern's syndicated TV series; appearing on the final show, she was still clad in a bikini.

Claudia Flores plays Janet, the beautiful, foreign exchange student, whose lack of horror movie education prompts a careless stroll in the woods. "The Janet character," explained Kanefsky, "was originally written as a spectacled bookworm. But when Claudia auditioned for the role, she was very innocent and we wanted to communicate her personality in the character's redevelopment. I regret that,

while she's likeable in the movie, her character appears to be overly naive...bordering on bimbo. Claudia had no problem with nudity, because—being a native Brazilian—topless beaches are the norm."

A film produced for only \$300,000—"closer to \$800,000, with the deferment," insisted Kanefsky—is vulnerable to those unpredictable drawbacks that an expanded budget may cushion. Case in point: a scene where the film's survivors wreck a car in an aborted escape attempt. "There's a car jump and we had a betting pool on how far the car would jump," sighed Kanefsky. "The driver won. He hit the ramp at 45 m.p.h. instead of 35 and he landed on the camera and broke it!" Then there's psychological warfare between director and cast members, each fatigued by primitive working conditions. Case in point: Bonnie Bowers and the slipper conflict. "There are scenes where Bonnie would swim out of a

pond," recounted Kanefsky, "and she wore little pink slippers. She didn't want to hurt her feet on the little grass blades at the bottom. During one scene, she lost one of her slippers and swam out of the pond. I said, 'Couldn't you reach down and get the slipper?' She said, 'That's not my job. So we spent 14 hours looking for the slipper.'

Kanefsky may try his hand at spoofing in other burgeoning genre, the teenage sex comedy, with *HORMONES: THE MOVIE*. But he's buckling down with the very serious *DARK INTENT*, an erotic thriller that may be produced in early '98. And there's the other project, as inevitable as the grisly fates of Kanefsky's comically clichéd characters. "It's called *THERE'S STILL NOTHING OUT THERE*," announced the director. "In the sequel, we instantly kill off all but one of the first film's survivors. The new monsters are alien babies—Siamese twins—who are bred in a maple syrup factory. And, this time, there are five girls in bikinis."

Spoiling the "sex begets violence" syndrome: Wendy Bednarz will "pay" for doing it.



Voluptuous Vamps and Outer Space Vixens

MEET B-MOVIE MOGUL JIM WYNORSKI... AND HIS
REPERTORY OF FEMMES FATALES.

BY DAN SCAPPEROTTI



Wynorski organizes the SLUMBER PARTY MASSACRE campaign (1982). Included are Andre Honore (left), who played a supporting role in the movie, and Jillian Kasner (FIRECRACKER BEVERLY HILLS VAMP) seated in center.

He's been declared "Hollywood's unofficial king of remakes and sequels" (DEATHSTALKER II, THE RETURN OF SWAMP THING, MUNCHIE, et al.). Jim Wynorski has accumulated over 25 features to his credit, and most are unabashedly exploitative. In the process, his films spoof the action genre's machismo and sexism. Two-dimensional heroes are embroiled in compatibly cartoonish violence. There's *beaucoup* nudity, but the chesty leading ladies are equally adept at clothes-dispensing and self-preservation.

Wynorski's affection for horror and science fiction films is reflected in his prolific output of work. A product of Long Island's north shore, he spent several years as an executive at Doubleday's Science Fiction Book Club. Wynorski persuaded the company to delve into the realm of film, prompting the release of record albums that stressed science fiction themes. His literary legacy includes *They Came from Outer Space*, a hard-cover anthology of 12 classic science fiction tales that became major motion pictures.

Traveling west, Wynorski launched his filmmaking career as a scriptwriter before making his directorial debut in *THE LOST EMPIRE* (1983), a parody of Republic serials and spaghetti westerns. He scored a coup in 1987, persuading Traci Lords to star in *NOT OF THIS EARTH*, a remake of Roger



Gill Robyn Harris
launched her career
as a topless model.
She graduated to
genre roles (*HAUNTING
OF MORELLA* among
them), and also
doubled for Ellen
Barkan in *SIESTA*.



Antonia Dorian,
one of Wynorski's
discoveries, has
joined the cast of
DINOSAUR ISLAND.
She also appeared
in Becky LeBeau's
SOFT BODIES video,
PARTY FAVORS.

because she'd been put through a lot of trouble with police and court hassles."

During the first couple of days, Lords was a little nervous on the set. When the actress later relaxed, Wynorski reshotted some of her scenes. "I felt her performance improved," he explained. "A lot of people told me that I would ruin my career, and never work again, because I was working with a former porno star. I put up a lot of my own money for that picture. I went to a lot of people and told them that I was making this science fiction film with Traci Lords, and that they should invest. They just said, 'No way.'"

Lords, and the notoriety linked to her X-rated past, proved to be a promotional asset. *The Los Angeles Times*, arriving on the first day of shooting, interviewed the film's director and star for a report printed in the next day's edition. "And the following day," Wynorski smiled, "everybody wanted to come down." **ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT**, *The Hollywood Reporter*... all of the news media wanted to come down. We did the picture for a half-million bucks and it was sold to MGM UA for a lot more. I made a lot of money.

"Traci was easy-going, and good to work with, although we had some problems with one scene. Traci had a low-cut dress that she had to run in. No matter how slow she ran, her breasts kept falling out. We had to have several retakes until they stayed in."

"She got a lot of TV work because of **NOT OF THIS EARTH**, including spots on **WISE GUY** and **MARRIED WITH CHILDREN**. She still has a lot of reputation to live down, but she knows that. She does a nudescene (in **NOT OF THIS EARTH**), but it is the first and last time she did such a scene in a legitimate picture."

Wynorski's casting runs the gamut from newcomers to sitcom stars. He tapped Teri Copley, best known for her short-lived **WE'VE GOT IT MADE** TV series, as the female lead of **TRANSYL-**



VANIA TWIST. "I needed a Marilyn Monroe-type and she was in my budget range," he recounted. "She's been married a couple of times and has a bunch of kids, but you'd never know it to look at her. She has a sort of young, fresh look. And she has very good comedy timing, which I needed for that film."

Heather Locklear, another veteran of TV's prime-time (**DYNASTY**, **T. J. HOOKER**), starred in Wynorski's "beauty and the beast" fable, **THE RETURN OF SWAMP THING**. "I heard stories about Heather being kind of difficult," explained the director. "To the contrary, she is lovely and sweet. She's also quite funny and had a good rapport with the crew and cast, off-screen, when we were on location."

Wynorski had also organized a repertory of "not ready for prime-time players." Bosomy starlets are alternately



because she is more
or less a lot in trouble with
me and our bosses.

During his days as a reporter, Wronski was a regular on the set. When the show was rebroadcast, Wronski showed up to help get ready.

last was just 800
and mind 2000. It
is a strong & well known and
less a well known & this
has a well known name.
For instance in New Haven
the one in New Haven
is the one in New Haven
talking on the air. But
there are many others
and many more.

She goes to TV shows
here and there. DE TELL
TARTT, the indomitable
WINE CUN'N MARKET
WITH CHILDREN. She
has a lot of fun, but
she doesn't see any
but badness in the
NOT OF THIS EARTH
out there. She is
her best character, a
little girl.

VANIA & WEST. I decided to make a movie about showmen in big cities. By reading the *Stage magazine*, I excepted of course, has furnished all the material I wanted. The story is about a showman who has a good idea, but he needs a book. And he has a good idea, but he needs a book. And he has a good idea, but he needs a book.

eastern training areas, and
rules and norms in
which religious men
have dramatic and
ever-shifting roles
in a society that is
generally a people
with a Western-style
relationship to nature
as, from the H
genies and people
to be found in
the bars or in
them over the p
the water, to the
spiritual and the
where there may be
a definite hermene
up the road.
I never do that.
I am the Bel
on when I return
Pawnee Pawnee
won't understand
get lost on him
marks over the road
So, I had to
return to the
horses to get him
go on what I need

WE'RE SAVING CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES for another day. But this is the special day. And the moment I walk in the door, I feel at home. I find

Master Ford (STRIPPED TO KILL) in HAUNTING OF MORELLA
feature sequence entry. A waterfall was built for the sequence.



Wyndahl described Frank Ladd's storm as "NOT OF THIS EARTH" per a suspended human being, very professional.

mother. She asked what she had done and I told her just put on this bikini and walk down the beach and strike a diving pose. She said, "Where did I sign up?"

The Wozniak Ensemble at Queen's

Berky LeBeau is a recently placed in Wynarski's movies, though he was the lead in the original *Shane*.





Marla Ford (STRIPPED TO KILL II) in HAUNTING OF MORELLA: a lesbian seduction scene. A waterfall was built for the sequence.

cast in leading or supporting roles, and critics inevitably review measurements rather than dramatic aptitude. But even skeptics can't deny that the actresses have developed genuine cult popularity. And what is Wynorski's system for choosing his female talent? "I cast from the Hollywood agents and people I meet at the beach, waitressing, or in the bars or in malls. I find them all over the place. I have them come to my office and explain the film and, in some cases, there may be a little bit of nudity. The reaction to the question of nudity is either 'I'll never do that' or 'That's fine with me. Believe it or not, when I interview former *Playboy* Playmates, many won't do nudity on film. The girls just coming through the ranks have no problem with it. So, I hardly ever interview centerfolds because, nine times out of ten, they won't give me what I need."

While shooting *CHOPPING MALL*, his robots-run-amok thriller, Wynorski had to draft an innocent bystander. "One of the four bathing beauties I needed for a scene didn't show up. It was time to shoot and I needed another bikini girl, so I walked through the mall until I found a young lady with a great body. I asked her, 'do you want to be in this

movie?' She asked what she had to do and I told her, 'Just put on this bikini, walk down this escalator and smile at this guy.' She said, 'Where do I sign up?'"

The Wynorski Ensemble of Queen B's

Becky LeBeau is a recurring player in Wynorski's movies. Though usually afforded minimal screen time,

LeBeau's voluptuous presence is a scene-stealer. "Becky is the traditional Hollywood bimbo," he chuckled. "She's been in dozens of films. She plays the best dumb blonde in the world, but in real life she's a very smart woman. She's an entrepreneur who has her own line of video tapes—which she writes, directs, produces and scores—called *SOFT BODIES*. They're the sort of softcore films that she sells to the home video market and distributes to the Playboy Channel. She was in *BACK TO SCHOOL* and *I'M GONNA GIT YOU SUCKA!* Whenever they need a busty strawberry blonde, they hire her. She played the same character in my new movie, *SINS OF DESIRE*, with Tanya Roberts. She's cast as a sexy blonde who works as a 'therapeutic dancer' at a sex clinic."

"Becky's claim to fame is that she has very large, very





Sorry guys, but
Becky LeBeau
recently married
a lawyer. LeBeau,
a recurring player
in Wynorski's
movies, not only
appeared in the
director's *SINS
OF DESIRE* but
wrote the songs.

real breasts. And they've been on view in a lot of pictures. She has a high-pitched voice when doing scenes. The interesting thing is that when you yell 'cut,' she snaps out of it and becomes smart again."

LeBeau is equally impressed with her director. "Jim's great to work with. He's a very talented and creative person," said LeBeau, who first met Wynorski when entering a beauty contest at the Palomino club. Crowned the "Queen of Songs," LeBeau candidly admitted that she was the only contestant who could sing and play the piano.

As NOT OF THIS EARTH's comic relief, LeBeau delivers a strip-o-gram to the wrong address; she blissfully undresses, unaware her audience is a blood-lusting alien. "I had these funky glasses on, and I guess I couldn't see out of them," confessed LeBeau. "I took out the singing telegram, and I was holding it upside down because I couldn't see it. That was pretty funny, and they decided to keep it in the picture. It was a real bimbo kind of thing to do." LeBeau, in her final scene, was required to shriek before she was transported to another planet. "Well, I don't scream that well," she smiled. "and they had to dub in the scream."

Her musical talents are showcased in SINS OF DESIRE. "I have a scene where I'm dancing and stripping to a song that I wrote for the movie, called 'Animal,'" she explained. "I also wrote and sing the title song, and a third number called 'Lost Without You.'" As producer of the SOFT BODIES videos, LeBeau recruits women whose well-endowed physiques are entirely natural; "90% of the models and actresses have boob jobs. It's hard to find pretty girls who haven't had them done."

Roxanne Kermohan, perhaps best known as the CRITTERS II alien who transforms into a living "Playboy" centerfold (complete with oversized staples), played NOT OF THIS EARTH's "lead hooker." She was also among the *femmes fatales* who plunged into the

"The reaction to the question of nudity is either 'I'll never do that' or 'That's fine with me' . . . Playboy Playmates, many won't do nudity on film."



Lana Clarkson in THE HAUNTING OF MORELLA's waterfall scene.

SCREAM QUEEN HOT TUB PARTY, which Wynorski co-produced with Fred Olen Ray. Kermohan was scheduled to appear in SINS OF DESIRE, but something went wrong. "The day before we were to shoot her scene," Wynorski explained, "she called and told me her phone was tapped. The next day, her number was disconnected and I never heard from her again. This is an example of why you have to think fast in this town and always have a backup in mind."

Soon after Maria Ford moved to Los Angeles from her home state of Colorado, she was discovered by director Katt Shea Rubin (STRIPPED TO KILL). Ford was engaged for the starring role in Roger Corman's thriller STRIPPED TO KILL II (1988). She made such a good impression that she garnered herself a five-picture deal with New Horizons-Concorde (her performance in 1991's NAKED OBSESSION, declared a "B masterpiece," is considered her best to date).

Cast in Wynorski's produc-

tion of THE HAUNTING OF MORELLA, Ford and the statuesque Lana Clarkson (BARBARIAN QUEEN) were required to film a lesbian love scene. A waterfall location was selected as an ideal environment; unfortunately, there's a shortage of waterfalls in Hollywood. "There's a picturesque waterfall just outside of Los Angeles," said Wynorski, "but the forestry service wouldn't let the girls in the water because their perfume might have harmed a batch of newly born sea bass."

"At another location, the ranger in charge didn't like nudity and wouldn't allow any cavorting at the waterfall. So I decided to build my own waterfall. We went out to the studio parking lot and built a three-story-high waterfall with pumps, paper-mache rocks and a lake, along with running water and plants. If you stepped back from it, it looked like a GILLIGAN'S ISLAND set. We shot it at night which really helps to sell it as a real place. If we had filmed in the daytime, you would have seen every

flaw

"Lana Clarkson, who was portraying the murderous governess, refused to take off these ridiculous little bloomers that she was wearing. I told her that they were going to look ridiculous, but she said she wouldn't do the scene without them. Of course, when they got wet, you could see through them ~~invariably~~ Maria Ford didn't mind the nudity but I figured that if one of them was going to wear clothes, the other one should too—giving it a softer lingerie look. As we did the scene, the wind in Santa Monica picked up and I was afraid the waterfall contraption was going to blow away. As a matter of fact, an hour after we finished shooting, it did come crashing down. We got the scene but it would have been much better if Lana had chosen to remove those blasted bloomers."

Wynorski is especially enthusiastic about fledgling *femme fatale* Gail Robyn Harris. As Gail Thackray, her

Toni Naples graduated from a CHOPPING MALL cameo (1986) to solid supporting roles.





Ravishing Pamela Runo will soon be sinking her teeth into a vampire role

real name, she was a photographic model and a "page three girl" in her native England. "When I met Gail," recalled Wynorski, "she was doing layouts for some of the men's magazines here in the States. She was very personable, but was only in the first stages of honing her acting abilities. We hired her as a nude model for different commercials we were shooting at Corman's, and then I gave her a supporting role in *THE HAUNTING OF MIRELLA*. She (originally) had a bigger part, but we had to cut it for time reasons."

"Some of the things they did to me on that film were pretty brutal," said Gail Robyn Harris, who prefers billing as Robyn Harris when linked to genre roles. "In one

"SORORITY HOUSE MASSACRE II basically uses any excuse to get us into lingerie and getting us all wet."

—Gail Robyn Harris—

scene, a guy discovered my body after I've had my throat slashed. I spent hours having death makeup put all over me. It was sticky and attracted flies, which they loved because it added to the effect. They dug a hole in the ground, put me in and covered me with dirt and leaves. I sat there with my eyes open and my hand sticking up in the air. I wasn't supposed to move, which was difficult because stuff kept falling in my eyes. I had to drive home on the freeway in my death makeup because we didn't have a shower out there."

"She was the lead in both *SORORITY HOUSE MASSACRE II* and *TOWER OF TERROR*," explained Wynorski, who added Harris to the stalwart cast of *SINS OF DESIRE*. "Gail's really a trouper, very agile and does a lot of her own stunts. She is also an accomplished free fall skydiver. She looks great in lingerie and doesn't mind doing nudity. Joe Bob Briggs did a piece on her and called her 'the first Valley girl with a British accent.' She's always on time, always knows her lines. I hire her whenever I can."

SORORITY HOUSE MASSACRE II basically uses any excuse to get us into lingerie and get us wet," added Harris. "I get killed off at the very end of the film, but there's a trick ending." She gets to come back in *TOWER OF TERROR*, which Wynorski described as a "female *DIE HARD* with supernatural overtones." "Most of that film we're running around half naked," Harris smiled. "That was fun because I get to use a machine gun. I'm more of a dominating character, more of a 'tough guy' in this film. And I get to live in the end. I'm more of a victim in the first film."

The sword and sorcery film was shot in Argentina, prompting communication problems. "I had to learn how to sword-fight in Spanish," recalled Naples, "because our stunt coordinator only spoke Spanish. Although I didn't do any stunt work before, I was doing a lot of training with weightlifting and karate. So when Jim asked me to do the sword fighting scene, I was all for it. I didn't think it was necessary to use a stunt person." Naples is fond of her screen character because "Sultana is her own woman. She's a liberated female in a strange, timeless place."

Wynorski intended to cast Naples in his *NOT OF THIS EARTH* remake. "She was scheduled to play the outer space woman from *Davanna*, but she pulled out and I got Rebecca Perle for that part." Naples did join *TRANSYLVANIA TWIST* as one among a trio of vampire women. She later surfaced as a cop in *SORORITY HOUSE MASSACRE II*, reprising the same role in the sequel, *TOWER OF TERROR*.

The *SORORITY* script, which was written in three days, had a male cop come in to check out the house," recalled Wynorski. "And there are corpses all over the place. We were at the end of the script and I wondered who was going to play the male cop. The only one who looked like a cop was my director of photography, Jürgen Baum. So I had him step into the role. The film came in at only 70 minutes. We had

Gail Robyn Harris, Karen Mayo-Chandler and Debbie Dutch in *TOWER OF TERROR*, a "female *DIE HARD* with supernatural overtones."





Haven De La Croix, Melanie Vincz and Angela Aames in *THE LOST EMPIRE* (1983). Wynorski made his directorial debut on the film.

filmed for seven days and I was about ten minutes short, so I hired Toni to come back and play this guy's assistant. I got Jurgen back and we shot, for another day, all these scenes in a strip bar. Of course, Toni didn't know what was going on and she ad-libbed. So, when we got around to shooting *TOWER OF TERROR*, I had Jurgen and Toni back. Toni brought a lot of her athletic prowess to the set. She had a good scene with Forry Ackerman, who plays the museum curator in *TOWER OF TERROR*.

"Basically, we were shooting behind Roger Corman's back while he was on vacation. Julie Corman was the producer, and we were going to surprise him by reusing sets from *SORORITY HOUSE MASSACRE II* and make another film while he was gone."

Later cast in *MUNCHIE*, Naples traded her usual *chutzpah* for chalk. "I play the school teacher, Mrs. Blaylock

They really toned down my looks. A child has a fantasy scene and the school teacher comes back as this glamorous, buxom babe. This was different from anything Jim had cast me for before, and it allowed me to be a sympathetic character."

Naples has recently wrapped *PRISON HEAT* for Cannon. "I play a 'good' bad guy," she explained. "I do all my own stunts. There are three or four major fights that I do. I'm now working on the script for a spool of women-in-prison films called *CHICKS IN CHAINS*."

Wynorski vowed that Pamela Runo, a relative newcomer to the genre, "will be showing up in a lot of pictures soon." The director met 23-year-old Runo, "born in the U.S.A. of Swedish descent and brought up in Texas," on the beach at Malibu. "I was at one of those Hollywood-type parties where everyone goes to see and be seen," recalled Wynorski. "Pamela was off to the

side sunning herself, oblivious to the stares from all the guys. She seemed inapproachable. The head of CBS programming asked me who she was and I decided to find out. I figured this girl would shoot me down in a second, but then I could go back to the party and have some fun. We talked a bit, I got her phone number and we went out for dinner."

Runo was subsequently cast in *MUNCHIE* as a funny Academy Award presenter in *SINS OF DESIRE*, she plays a nurse who works for a sex clinic; Runo resigns from her post, passing the job to Tanya Roberts, after she's sexually harassed by the clinic's owner (Delia Sheppard). "She will also be in a vampire movie in the fall," said Wynorski. "Pamela is a gorgeous blonde with a great body, and is an accomplished martial arts fighter. And she can act."

Members of the "repertory" are featured in Wynorski's 1992 holiday movie, *HOME FOR CHRISTMAS*, shot for

ABC-TV. The cast—along with Howard Hessman—includes *DEATHSTALKER II*'s Queen Kong and Toni Naples. Becky LeBeau and Gail Robyn Harris are among Wynorski's *HEARTSTOPPERS*, a syndicated Halloween special. And the gang will be back for the latest Jim Wynorski/Fred Olen Ray collaboration, *DINOSAUR ISLAND*. Jim Danforth (*WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH*) is furnishing the special effects; but even Danforth's wizardry may take a back seat to the comely cast, which includes LeBeau, Harris and Pamela Runo. Two more good reasons for being stranded on the island are Ty Randolph (*AMAZONS*) and Antonia Dorian.

"It's fun working with Hollywood's most curvaceous screamers," said Wynorski. "But, they'll go on to greener pastures, and greater cinematic victories, in more dramatic roles... at least let's hope so."

SUZANNE AGER

LIVE!

THE FORMER COMEDIENNE, AND HORROR FILM HEROINE,
WANTS THE LAST LAUGH ON HOLLYWOOD.

BY LARRY GREENBERG

The following synopsis is for a television miniseries never produced, based on a best-seller never written: a beautiful, young ballet dancer throws in her tutu and heads west with dreams of movie stardom. Upon arriving, she's embraced by the B-movie industry, where she acts in a dozen or so movies over a two-year period. But that wasn't enough for our heroine, who yearned for much more. So, she works to infiltrate the almost exclusively male-dominated industry to achieve her goal: acting and producing her own films. She eventually earns enough money to pay for her ailing sister's desperately needed heart transplant.

Now, picture Cheryl Ladd as our heroine and you have a sweeps-weeknight missupper opus with a guaranteed 40% share in the ratings. But this is not a work of fiction; it's the real-life story of actress Suzanne Ager. And with the exception of the sister's heart transplant, it's all true.

"Having the opportunity to produce and star in something is a dream we all have," beamed Ager. In a town populated with extremely unfriendly actresses, Ager took her dream one step further. But then, she's not your average actress; she's also a former stand-up comedienne who holds a degree in architecture.

I must admit, upon meeting Ager I hadn't seen any of her films. I thought life was too short to sit through titles like *THE BIKINI CARWASH COMPANY*. But after laying eyes on Ager, I was sure that every director she had ever worked with had terribly miscast her. Ager is hardly the helpless bimbo running from a mutant alien. She belongs, instead, on the back of James Dean's Harley, said



Robert Vaughn, cast as Satan, and Ager are a not-so-odd couple in *LITTLE DEVILS*. The black comedy is scheduled for a 1993 release.

ing, with the wind blowing through her hair. Ager radiates a sexuality the other B queens can't touch.

Ager's B-film career was fueled by an ambition to perform in movies; bored with her soap opera career in New York, Ager went to Hollywood to act in movies. Approximately one day after her arrival, she was cast in a *Tract Lords* vehicle, *SHOCK FM DEAD*, where she played a vamp who steals Lords' boyfriend. She described her costume as "costar" as "very nice, a complete professional."

With her next film, *THE ALIEN WITHIN*, Ager began a working relationship with low-budget *wunderkind* Fred Olen Ray (played in our miniseries

by Ben Gazzara). The movie, which combined leather and gore, a 1987 stinker, *THE EVIL SPAWN*, a *Tract Lords* sequel, and *Tract Newsom*, was Ager's first encounter with ultra-low-budget film-making. "For me, working with Ray was a great experience because he really knows his stuff. It felt like the equivalent of four years of film school," explained Ager. "Everyone on the crew has great respect for him."

Ray was equally impressed with Ager, so much so that he continued to cast her in his films, including *LITTLE DEVILS* (of the girls vs. Satan *EVIL LOONS*, low-budget *ROGER RABBIT* for the *Bratwurst* and *INNERSANCTUM* (with Tanya Roberts, probably the only actress in the world who staged a comeback by starring opposite Andrew Stevens). At this point, Ager's acting career accelerated at a pace that would put *Madame Curie* to shame. She shined in otherwise forgettable titles such as *BUFORD'S BEACH BUNNIES* and *MILLENNIUM COUNTDOWN*. Sure, the movies stunk but Ager had an amazing presence. She banished the screen with a James Earl Jones-like charisma.

Ager, and it may become true, with the roles she is being offered. "I was tired of being typecast. I was looking for a role I really wanted to play. Every time I worked on a film, I knew, in the back of my mind, that one day I was going to produce one of my own movies." So Ager doggedly searched for a script with which she could make her acting dreams come true.

Several months later, *FATAL JUSTICE* was in production. Ager stars as a CIA hit woman who must carry out a contract on her long-lost father.

The movie was shot in Dallas, Texas

“I was tired of banging down doors, looking for a role I really wanted to play. So I produced my own movie.”

and Shreveport, Louisiana. “We worked with the local film commission, acquiring locations and vehicles for the car chases,” explained Ager. “As producer the most important thing to me was *getting it done*. That meant coming in on time and within the budget. With every intention to continue working as a hyphenate, Ager has already selected a script for her next project.

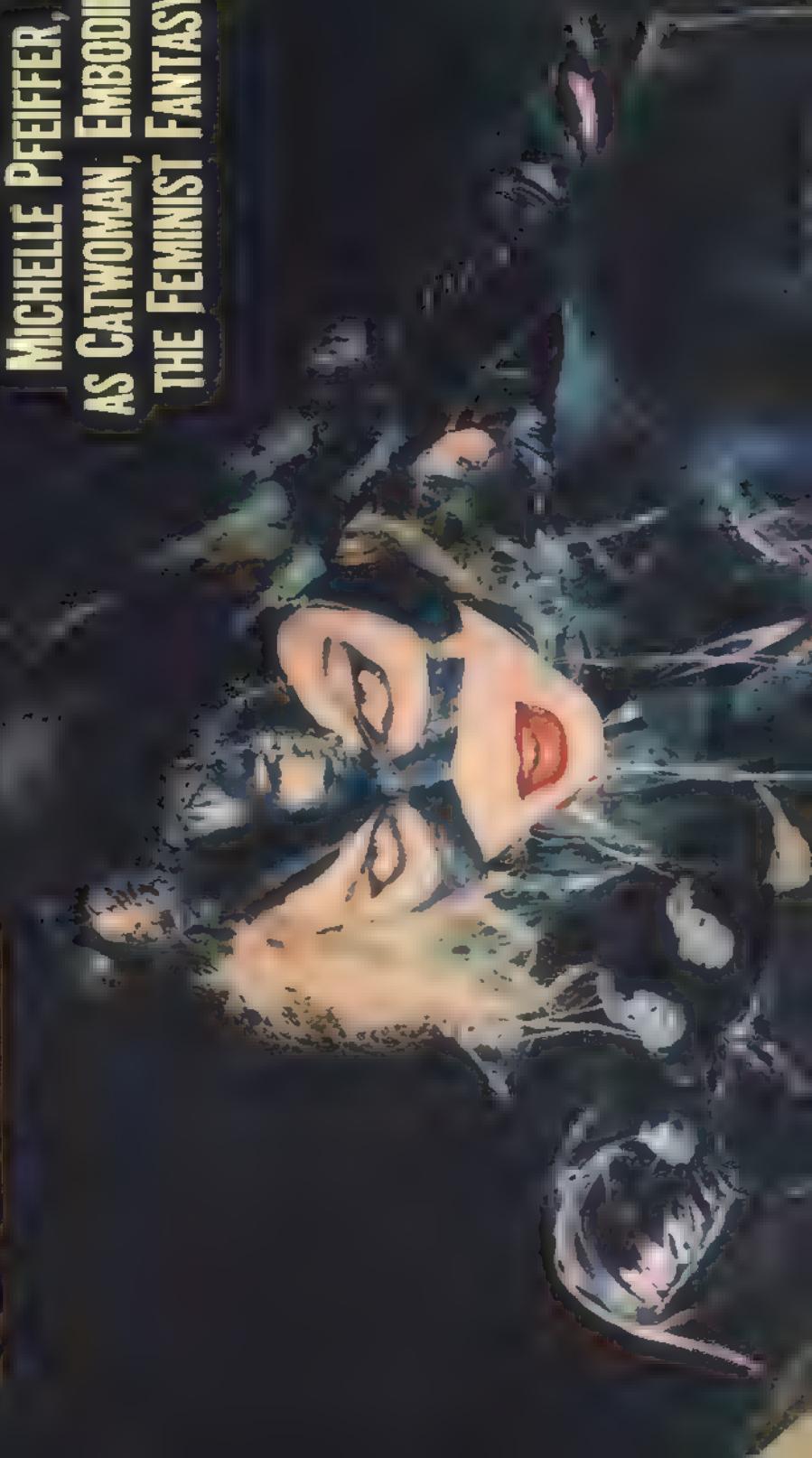
Part II of the miniseries: our heroine etau's her way to the top of Tinseltown's boys' club, where she finds liberation and sexual awakening. Other young starlets follow her path—leading to a sequel. □

Ager launched her career with demure, “cotton candy” cheesecake. Her control as **FATAL JUSTICE** producer is reflected in the film's p.r. pictures, projecting a more assertive image (right).



CATWOMAN SPEAKS

MICHELLE PFEIFFER,
AS CATWOMAN, EMBODIES
THE FEMINIST FANTASY



CATWOMAN SPEAKS

MICHELLE PFEIFFER, AS CATWOMAN, EMBODIES THE FEMINIST FANTASY



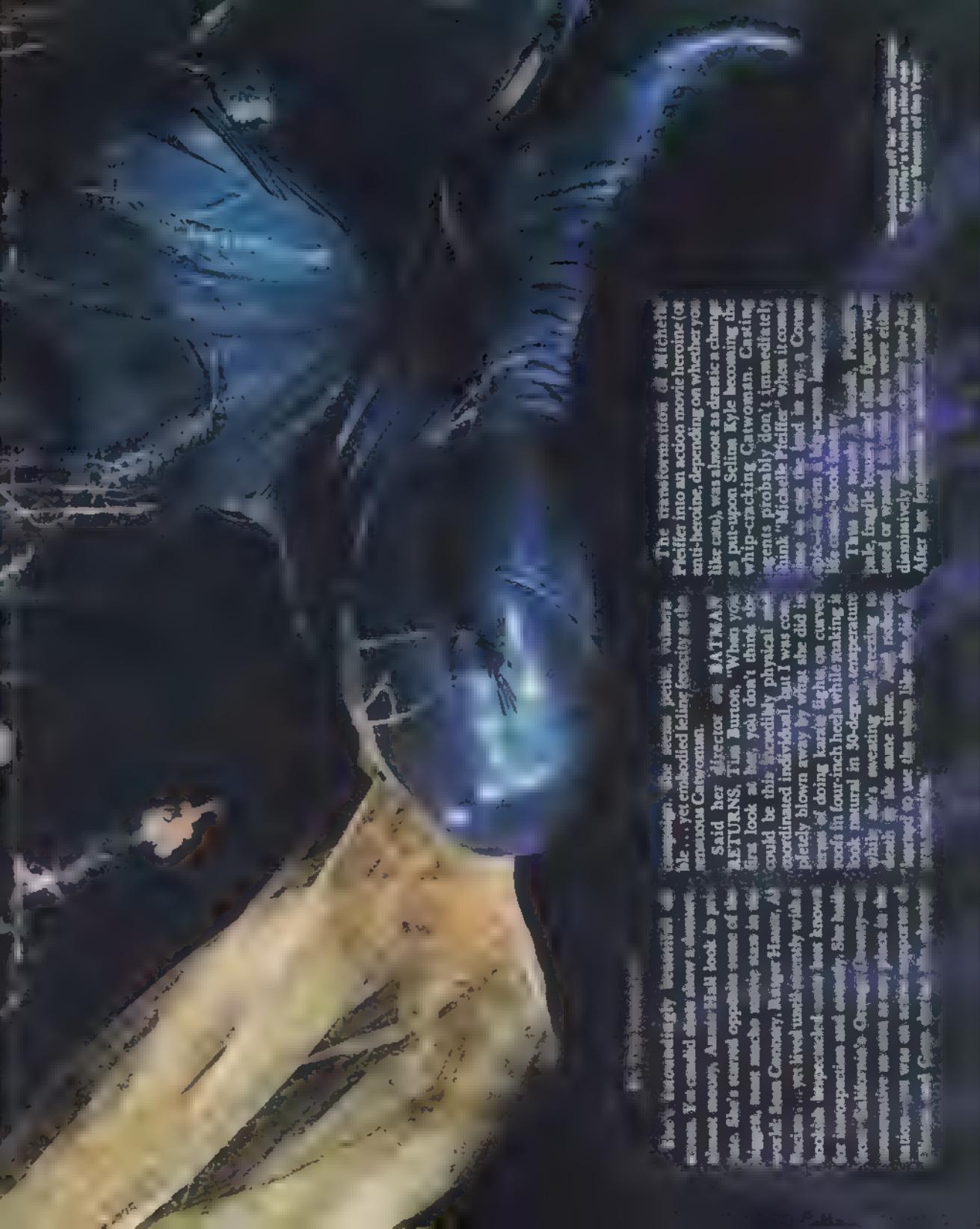
she's conveniently unavailable for dinner. Yet crucial night show a蕪ances. Without money, Anna Hall had to go it alone. She's started upping some of the shows, more radio talk shows in the world: Sam Cassany, Kieran Hawk, Al Roker... yet Hall still firmly wills herself insulated from new know-how for self-preservation and control. She has to do California's "Oprah" herself. "We are more or less in a bubble," she says. "It was an interesting position to be in, but it's been a challenge."

She's been a radio host since 1982... yet celebrated her 20th anniversary this summer.

Said her director on *BATMAN RETURNS*, Tim Burton: "The only look at her, she doesn't think she needs to think. She's physically strong, but she's also a brilliant, commanding individual." "I was completely blown away by what she did in terms of doing those tightrope curves in her four-track heel," he continues. "It was a natural, 30-degree movement that she's wearing and dancing to with all the other stars. She's a natural performer to use the tightrope as a prop."

The transformation of Michelle Pfeiffer into an action movie heroine is all heroic, depending on whether you like cats, was known as a tragic character as pH-queen Selina Kyle becoming the whip-cracking Catwoman. Casting agents probably know immediately if "Highway Hustle" when it comes to the cat's lead for *Batman Returns*. "She's a natural," says director Tim Burton.

With her sex appeal, her sex appeal, her sex appeal... Anna Hall is a sex symbol or something. She's a sex symbol or something. She's a sex symbol or something. After her?



The transformation of Michelle Pfeiffer into an action movie heroine (or anti-heroine, depending on whether you like cats) was almost as drastic a change as put-upon Selina Kyle becoming the whip-cracking Catwoman. Casting agents probably "don't immediately think 'Michelle Pfeiffer'" when it comes time to cast the lead in any "Casanova" movie, even if the screen is filled with classic-looking beauties.

campaign, like some petite, vivacious blonde . . . yet embodied feelings so virile as the nervous Catwoman.

Said her Director on BATMAN RETURNS, Tim Burton, "When you first look at her, you don't think she could be this incredibly physical and coordinated individual, but I was completely blown away by what she did in terms of doing karate, fightin' em clewed up in four-inch heels while talkin' in

pale, fragile bones, and when figure were
brought to the surface, they were either
dissimilative or After the burning

which she's having difficulty to
decide on at the same time. And I
think that's a good response of
her need to use the skills she has.



Pleffler bounced her "babe" image in 1983's *SCARFACE* (right). Her Catwoman costume was "painful to the point where I couldn't walk."

...ing in the humorless TV spin-off of NATIONAL LAMPOON'S ANIMAL HOUSE called DELTA HOUSE, the mercifully short-lived Aaron Spelling trash em up series B.A.D. CATS (1980), and footnotes in movie history like FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN and HOLLYWOOD KNIGHTS, she looked like she was on the verge of stardom with the lead in GREASE II. But the movie ... lost some of the charm of the original and Pfeiffer and costar Maxwell Caulfield were seen as pale pretenders to the thrones of Olivia Newton-John and John Travolta. After getting billed sixth in the misfire CHARLIE CHAN AND THE CURSE OF THE DRAGON LADY (a 1981 send-up 20 years too late to ride the camp wave), Pfeiffer seemed doomed to play insipid ingenues in films that were best forgotten.

The young woman was undeterred by so-so breaks and unworthy vehicles. She knew from her teen years back at Fountain Valley High School that acting was her dream between hanging out with surfers. The good parts would come, even if she had to go out and grab them. "You either commit yourself or you fail," said Pfeiffer at a BATMAN RETURNS press conference. "There's no in-between. You can't stop to think about what you're doing. You just do."

Visibility and vehicle combined with Martin Scorsese's remake of SCARFACE (1983), with Pfeiffer adding layers to the coke-addicted mistress. She made a delicious and duplicitous mystery woman in John Landis' '85 romp IN TO THE NIGHT and held the screen opposite Rutger Hauer in LADY-HAWK.

For George Miller's frenetic film version of John Updike's THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK, Pfeiffer was paid considerably less than her two fellow suburban housewife-witches (Cher and Susan Sarandon, both established stars at the time), but the good notices and high visibility of the film firmly established her as a first-rank femme star. The film version emphasized the devil character more than Updike's novel, but the tale still retained its reflection on females in society.

Said Pfeiffer, "I really see it as more a statement about women and specifically

PFEIFFER

“This was about a woman discovering her empowerment. And part of that is her sexuality . . . I do see (Catwoman) as a positive role model for women.”



Pfeiffer played the "window dressing" in the critically panned CHARLIE CHAN AND THE CURSE OF THE DRAGON QUEEN (1981).

about women coming into their own power. Which, I think, are very strong themes in today's society." In the way Jack Nicholson's chortling Devil seems a glimpse of his future "Joker," Pfeiffer's transformation from suburban housewife to psychotronic Fury presages her own later BATMAN villainess.

When the long-in-development BATMAN project was finally given a go-ahead by Warner Bros and Guber-Peters, Pfeiffer tried to use some new found clout to inject a character she'd fancied since childhood in suburban Fountain Valley, California. "Catwoman was a childhood heroine of mine," she stated. "When they did the first BATMAN movie, I actually begged them to write her into the script, but nobody would listen to me."

Even if there was no room in the Joker vs. Batman psycho-drama for Bob Kane's lithesome lioness, Pfeiffer's star

continued on its ascendancy, albeit in low-key roles. The romantic (if downbeat) THE RUSSIA HOUSE opposite Sean Connery and the wickedly stately DANGEROUS LIAISONS continues to establish what seemed to be "the Michelle Pfeiffer part" quiet intelligent, sensitive, with a hint of melancholia.

That melancholia got downright depressive with her dour waitress in FRANKIE AND JOHNNY and the trouble-plagued production LOVE FIELD, a downbeat interracial romance. Denzel Washington walked out after a confrontation with the director.

Pfeiffer's private life remained as discreet and unobtrusive as her screen roles. Her main squeeze (until recently) was Fisher Stevens, best known for his film work in SHORT CIRCUIT and its sequel as the nerdy Indian scientist. That someone as physically unprepossessing as Stevens could win the heart of Michelle Pfeiffer must've gladdened the hearts of introverts around the world.

The Caped Crusader resurfaced once more, with Tim Burton at the helm and Michael Keaton under the cowl. Establishing Bruce Wayne's character in the first film left more room to develop other parts (especially since Kim Basinger's Kathy Kane character was jettisoned and Robin still lurks in limbo). Several rewrites later, the antagonists became a double act, the Penguin as the primary heavy and the Catwoman as his on-again, off-again partner in crime.

But Pfeiffer's early interest in the sexy schizoid clinched the role for her. Quirky Sean Young led a Quixotic uphill charge to claim the role by designing her own Catwoman costume, strutting into Tim Burton's production office and insisting she was the Catwoman. Perhaps she was on Bizarro World, but not on the Warner Bros' lot. Young proudly showed her videotaped frontal assault on Joan Rivers' talk show, convinced this flamboyant exhibitionism was just the sort of thing to grab people's attention. In Young's defense, if she had won the role, the triumph would've become Hollywood legend, rather than a case study in aberrant psychology. There were also snide gossip-column items indicating snickers from the production office.

THE CAT AND THE CAMERAMAN

Some photographers are born to greatness, others have greatness thrust upon them, and others hust a their way from pizzadé—very boy to ace shutterbug in one fell swoop.

Such was the case of the extremely determined Jack Pedota, whose photo of Michelle Pfeiffer as Catwoman graces our cover. Pedota's extraordinary color visualizations captured the *aura* quality of *BATMAN RETURNS*. The pre-release posters featuring Pedota's photos of The Bat, The Cat and The Penguin heralded the coming of the film and became rare collectors items overnight—literally. Appearing on bus stop postercases all over the country, they rarely were still in place a week after. Other Pedota photos of Catwoman are seen on pages 32-33 and 39 (top).

The 29-year-old native of Colorado had been trying to make his mark as a pro shutterbug for several years in Los Angeles without much luck. He admired Burton's first *BATMAN* and tried in vain to make contact, using the normal channels. "I called Tim's assistant once a week for three weeks," Pedota recalled, and her answer was the same: "Tim's very busy right now. Why don't you call him back a little later?" When? And she said, "About a year and a half."

To make ends meet, Pedota delivered pizzas for a trendy Italian eatery on Melrose Avenue. Angel's. When a phone order came into the restaurant from Tim Burton's production office on the Warner's lot, Pedota reacted with the elation of Bruce Wayne spying the Bat Signal. He slipped an ultra-stylized photo of a Manhattan fashion model into the pizza box (along with extra cheese) and dropped the delivery off.

The stunt could've backfired if

continued on page 66

Pfeiffer strikes a pose for Pedota



Some critics charged the erotic conflict between Catwoman and Batman was "too suggestive" for children. "There are far more explicit things going on, even on television," laughed Pfeiffer

when Raquel Welch's exercise videos made the oil-ceremony a proxy appearance. In Welch's defense, she has an obvious bigger-than-life quality that may be appropriate for the role and has done action as well as comedy, like *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*.

So Michelle Pfeiffer was neither the only choice nor the obvious choice for the double role of mousy Selina Kyle and the leather-clad dominatrix of Gotham City. Perhaps the lack of obviousness worked in her favor. Perhaps, too, her past romantic liaison with Michael Keaton might've been a point in her favor. But she lost out to Annette Bening of *BUGSY* until Bening herself dropped out, in a much-publicized parting due to a slight case of pregnancy.

The potential for doing comedy and action suited Pfeiffer as a personal change of pace. "I was sick of my own melancholy," she said of her screen persona, "and I thought certainly other people are getting tired of it. And maybe people are ready for a change. The timing couldn't have been more perfect. So I was delighted when the opportunity finally presented itself."

She had preconceptions about director Tim Burton, based primarily on seeing his films. "I thought he was going to be much stranger than he is! I also thought he was English for some reason. He's really pretty normal."

Their contact was primarily professional, however. "We didn't really socialize, and what he does in his own home, I don't know. But I also didn't expect him to be as adept in dealing with character

and character development, because he's so visually oriented. Usually directors who are that visual leave it up to the actors, and just sort of hope that you're standing in the right place in the right light. I think the beauty of Tim Burton's work and the beauty of this character is that he's brave enough to leave things a little ambiguous."

She was a Tim Burton fan before *BATMAN RETURNS*, and is a die-hard supporter now that the film is part of her past. The images he creates are so mind-boggling! I think the one thing that all Tim's films have in common is that they seem to have an innocent darkness to them. It's this sort of childlike darkness which I've never seen before. I think that's very unusual. That's what people respond to. It's not an adolescent sensibility because it's too provocative and too insightful to be adolescent. It's profound in the way six-year-olds sometimes are in their simplicity . . . before there's a chance to get completely screwed up and completely in denial. There's a kind of honesty that I feel comes from his movies, the *Pee-wee Herman* film [*PEEWEE'S BIG ADVENTURE*], *EDWARD SCISSORHANDS* and even the short subjects he did. And he's that way in person, too.

What concerned her most, obviously, was her own character, a combination of wallflower and tigress. "I liked the story. I loved my character. I thought she was very well drawn out. This was about a woman discovering her empowerment. And part of that is her sexuality."

Feminist though she is, Pfeiffer didn't



consider the role a political statement. "I think there are feminist elements in the story. I do see her as a positive role model for women, if you look at her metaphorically, in that it's about empowerment and this character coming into her own empowerment and I think that's a positive image for women. But she has some pretty strong things to say to women, too. She's lashing out at a lot of people. 'It was much easier for me to play bumbling, nerdy Selina Kyle,' she added with a slight smile. 'I really had to work my way towards Catwoman.'

Part of that process of working toward the character was the sheer physical training. Though she was doubled in some of the more acrobatic shots by a world-class kickboxer, she performed much of the physical action herself. "I really liked that part of it, actually," she noted. "The physicality was fun for me—a lot of training, kickboxing, yoga, some martial arts, some gymnastics, bullwhip training. I loved the whip. I still have my whips."

The original design of the Catwoman costume proved not just awkward, but painful. Perhaps this was Sean Young's secret revenge, an insidious plot to defeat the usurper via the costume department. "Initially, they hadn't thought about how I'd be able to go to the bathroom! So they had to take care of that problem. There was a strap on the hood that cut off my vocal chords and was smashing against my face. I was miserable the first few weeks."

"I wondered, 'How am I ever going to do a decent job of creating a character with all of this? How am I ever going to get beyond all these uncomfortable obstacles?' I dreaded going on that stage every day and freezing."

The eroticism inherent in the Catwoman character is obvious: a personification of feline femininity with overtones of sado-masochism: the leather, the mask, the whip. But Pfeiffer downplayed the kinkier aspects in favor of a post-feminist interpretation. "I don't think it's an issue," she said defensively. "I love the movie metaphorically. Tim and I discussed that in the beginning, that the element of Selina Kyle coming into her own sexually and the newness of that, the

PFEIFFER

"Tim Burton and I discussed the element of Selina Kyle coming into her own sexually and the newness of that . . . when it was manipulation and when it was real sexuality."



Jack Pfeiffer's "horny devil" transformed Cher Susan Sarandon, and Pfeiffer into THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK (1987). Controversy brewed when one community upset with the film's occult premise (right), denied permission for shooting exterior locations.

playfulness of it, playing with that, when it was manipulation and when it was real sexuality. "Look, she's not tying him up and having sex. She's not beating him and having sex with him. That's S & M. It's open to interpretation. There were elements of it . . . but the S & M aspect didn't contribute a lot to that."

The vast soundstages had been air-conditioned not only for atmosphere, but to protect the hundreds of live penguins which waddled through the scenes. The combination of skin-tight leather outfit and Antarctic climate was not particularly pleasant. Even being tightly wrapped from head to foot in the black rubber and silicon bodysuit didn't keep

out the chill. "Actually, it was freezing cold because the sets were air-conditioned down to 35 degrees. It was cold. No that suit didn't keep me warm. The equivalent would be walking down the streets of New York in a wetsuit in the middle of winter."

She had reason to envy costar Keaton's lighter, streamlined bat suit, far less cumbersome than his original. That and the face-hugging original cat-cowl and the stress on physical activity (not to mention the bathroom) was an interesting reversal—a dominatrix dominated. "I think she often thought that I was torturing her for no apparent reason," Burton said, shrugging his long, black mane. "And maybe that was true; I don't know."

The Catwoman exterior itself aided Pfeiffer's inner transformation. "When you're in this outfit," she reflected, "you can't help but feel different. You just do. You look in the mirror and there it is. And you feel different. You begin to move differently. However, initially, you're so uncomfortable—I'm talking *painful* to the point of where I couldn't really walk in the beginning, or breathe, or hear, or talk. So



I had to get past all of those obstacles. Once I had the mask fixed and I had control of my vocal chords again, I wanted to do something different with Selina and Catwoman vocally. Initially, I just wanted to lower my register. You know, the Catwoman really speaks from the gut while Selina is cut off from about here somewhere," she gestured near her throat. "One day I stumbled upon this kind of 1940s actress voice. You know, the kind of voice they always use. And it seemed right, so I kept it—a little Joan Crawford. It wasn't a choice. It just came out one day, 'cause I didn't have any other choices. So I used it."

Production crews are often like tem-

porary families and Pfeiffer likes to get to know the people with whom she's working. With the mammoth crew necessary for *BATMAN RETURNS*, however, that proved nearly impossible. "Every day there was a new crew member showing up that I didn't know. I never got to know everybody's name." And the sheer scope of the sets proved bewildering. "I was constantly getting lost on the set because they would move buildings around and I'd wander around the set and I couldn't find my way."

Despite the gargantuan budget and lengthy schedule, the performers rarely had a chance to rehearse except on the spot. "We didn't have much rehearsal. There was really no way to rehearse this kind of movie if it's so technical and complicated. We had a read through and a few rehearsals and many discussions about the character development, but actually getting it up on its feet... I guess there were more discussions about getting it up on its feet than actually rehearsing."

The film was a mitigated success, making a great deal of money, but not nearly the blockbuster the original was. Burton was praised for his visual vision and taken to task for his loose grip on plot and character. Some critics castigated the film for its cat-meets-bat sexiness, claiming that it was too suggestive for the children's audience that would undoubtedly see it. "I don't think so," argued Pfeiffer with a laugh. "Aww, come on! I mean what? I *hck* his face! Big deal! There are far more explicit things going on, even on television!"

Sexual nitpicking aside, Michelle Pfeiffer was universally praised for her double-role performance. Her victory was reflected in merchandising: *Catwoman* was strong among the toy tie-ins. Despite the hours of training, uncomfortable costume, frozen soundstages and penguins underfoot, she grew very fond of her Gotham City alter ego (or egos?) as the end of the production arrived.

"When we wrapped," she said wistfully. "I felt like we were just beginning. Towards the end of the last month of shooting, I was really up to speed, where I was having fun with the character. On the last day, it was so liberating! Yet at the same time, it was kind of sad to hang up my suit."

PFEIFFER

"Some lines were cut from the movie that summed up her character... 'Little girls are brought up to wear clean panties and boys are brought up to conquer the world.'"



Rutger Hauer and Pfeiffer conspire with an evil curse in *LADYHAWKE* (1985). The film validated her credibility as a leading lady.

FELINE FATALE

Q & A with MICHELLE PFEIFFER

Question When you researched the *Catwoman* character, you not only read the script, but went back through previous incarnations.

Michelle Pfeiffer: I went back and reviewed that original *BATMAN* movie. I hadn't realized how campy it was. It was really quite brilliant but as a kid, you don't know they're doing camp. I think *BATMAN RETURNS* worked in much the same way, in that children will come away with an experience on their own level, and older audiences will come away with views on their level.

*What did you think of the previous *Catwoman*, Julie Newmar?*

When I saw the show, I was eight years old. She did forbidden things. She broke a lot of social taboos of the time. Little girls are brought up to be good and behave, and certainly not act out in any kind of physically aggressive way. Yet here was this woman dressed as a black cat and you were never quite sure

whether she was good or bad. I liked that she was bad... but you were allowed to love her at the same time. Those are, to me, always the most memorable and engaging villains. I liked that she was mean and vicious. There were some lines that were cut from our movie that I felt really summed up her character. She says, "Little girls are brought up to wear clean panties, and little boys are brought up to conquer the world." I think that all of a sudden there was this character there who was allowed to be amoral to us. She was always a very liberating character, and always a little ahead of the times.

And the printed version, or rather versions, of the character?

As you look back at the old comic books, going all the way back to the '30s, you see the evolution of *Catwoman*. She has always represented women of the current era. If you go back to the '50s, she's very voluptuous and kittenish. Then you start to see a little more dominant character start to evolve around the '70s and she becomes more muscular and streamlined. I think that this *Catwoman* is definitely a reflection of what's happening today.

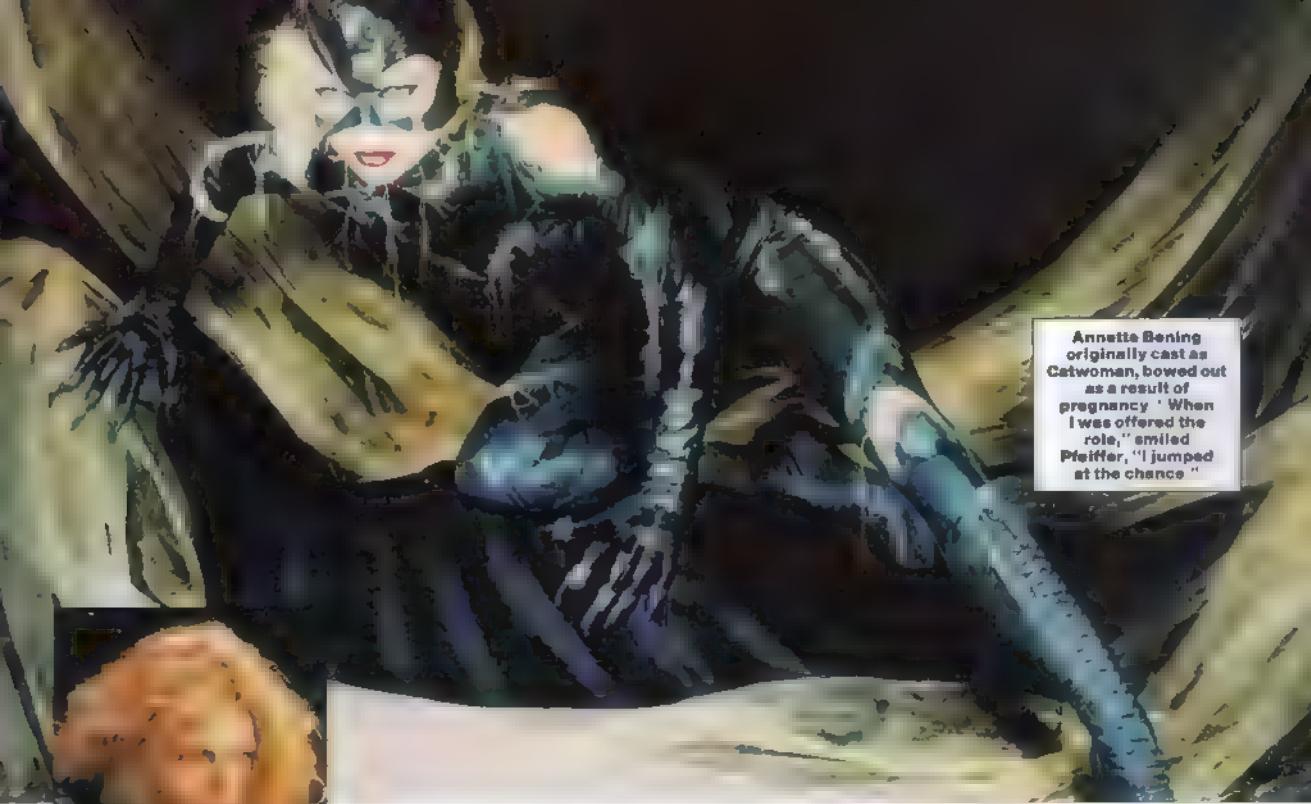
*The *Catwoman* outfit is incredibly sexy, form fitting and all of that, yet your entire body was covered. Did you feel shielded because of the over-all covering, or exposed?*

I mean, think about it. You know I'm dressed up as a cat and you're totally exposed, and behaving in ways in which women are not conditioned to behave. I had to totally let go of all my inhibitions in order to do it—in a bigger way than I've had to do before. In a very physical way, I knew I was in good hands with Tim Burton in the hands of a lesser director it's a very broad thing to do.

Did you get any extracurricular use out of the whip-training?

It's funny that, whenever you mention whips, everybody gets very giggly, without exception. I had this amazing teacher, Anthony DeLongis. He had this very unusual approach to the bullwhip. There was something in his technique. I'd never seen it approached in that way—a beauty, an elegance and a sexual quality to it, which at any moment could turn violent. Which I thought was

continued on page 60



Annette Bening originally cast as Catwoman, bowed out as a result of pregnancy. "When I was offered the role," smiled Pfeiffer, "I jumped at the chance."



Vivian Schilling

**FROM SEXY STARLET TO PRODUCER—AND IT'S ONLY ROUND #1
IN HER STRUGGLE TO BECOME "THE FIRST FEMALE POWER-
HOUSE BEHIND HORROR & FANTASY FILMS."**

BY JOHN THONEN



Thus far, my movie roles have been straightforward
no love scenes."

Beauty is a valued though not uncommon attribute in the hallowed halls of Hollywood. In this off-kilter fantasy land, *talent* is far less common and strangely less valued. To find a young performer who possesses both, along with the drive and fortitude to use them to full advantage, validates the "stuff stars are made of" adage. And the vivacious Vivian Schilling has the right stuff.

With only seven films and a brief soap stint to her credit, Schilling may soon orchestrate projects that will present her in various combinations as star, writer, producer and even director. Many better-known performers have struggled for years to achieve such opportunities. Instead, Schilling has managed to function in a kind of charmed microcosm of standard career development. She has gone through all the customary stages—starving actress, B-movie performer, lead player, etc.—but each for amazingly brief periods of time before progressing onto the next stage.

The 1991 home video release *SOU L TAKER* has been the major impetus behind the flurry of activity around Schilling. While only her fourth film and first real starring role, it garnered a Saturn Award nomination as 1991's Best Video release. Not bad, considering *TERMINATOR 2*—which earned the Best Science Fiction film award—was produced on 100 times *SOU L TAKER*'s budget. Much of the praise must justifiably fall on Schilling's alabaster white shoulders. As star, writer and co-producer, her contributions can hardly be ignored.

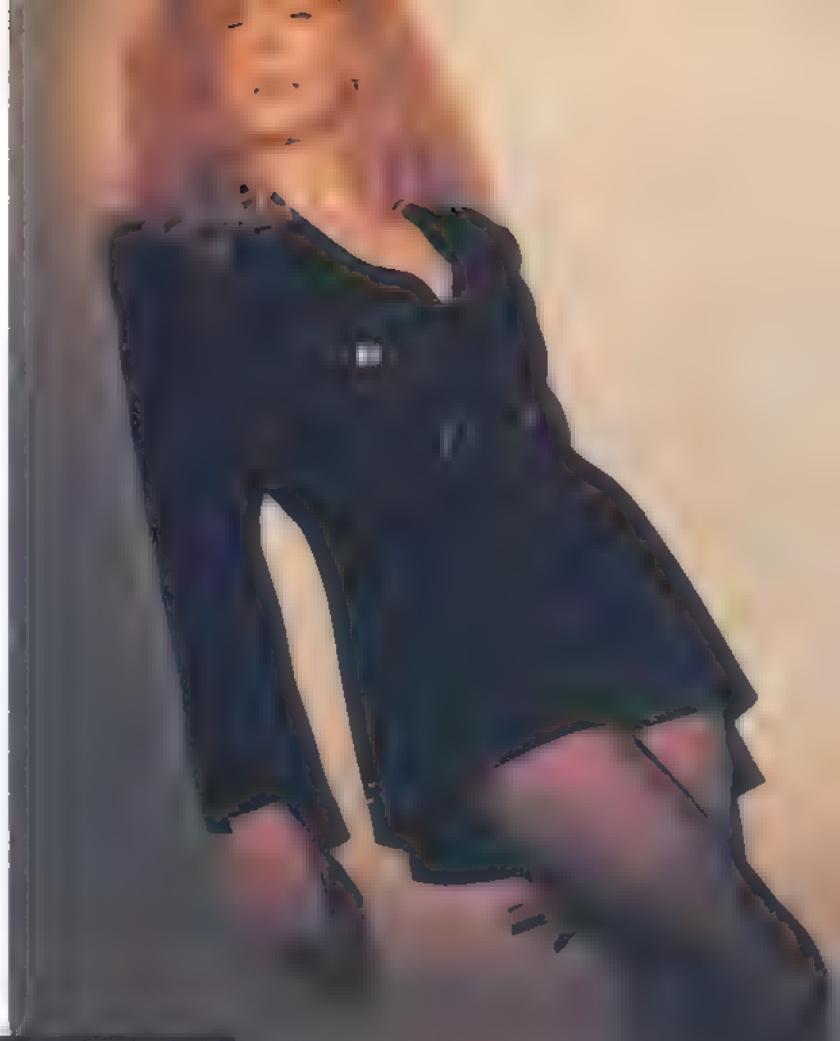


"In next year's **FATAL AMBITION**, I play a character who is obsessed with all sorts of vices. It's my chance to shed the 'good girl' image."

Schilling began acting as a Midwest high school senior. "I was lucky enough to have a teacher who took interest in me and encouraged me to try for a college scholarship in drama," recalled Schilling. "Amazingly, I got it." After only two years at Wichita State University, she decided to take on the West Coast. In 1984 it was off to California for studio apartment living, minimal wage work that included waitressing . . . and the inevitable encounters with Hollywood con-men. "Everybody out here is making a film. Of course, they don't have any money, no cast and probably no talent. But they talk good," said Schilling. "You've got to be very cautious and develop a thick skin fast. The fantasy isn't just on the screen. A lot of these people live in it."

Honing her dramatic skills at the Lee Strasberg theatre, Schilling once more pushed the time envelope. Landing a small role in a low-budget science-fiction film, Schilling set out on another high-speed learning program—working for Fred Olen Ray. "I worked on *PRISON SHIP* [released as *STAR-SLAMMER*] for just ten days [actually more than half of the \$200,000 pic's shooting schedule] but it was like a compressed course in low-budget filmmaking," Schilling laughed. "Fred is an incredibly nice guy who knows exactly what he wants and how to stretch a dollar to the maximum. The sets were all leftovers from a Corman film [the eternally cannibalized *BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS*] and I guess the effects shots were too. I learned all the basics. How to hit a mark, how to learn rewritten scenes minutes before they're going to be shot, how to work 14, even 18 hours a day. We were

"I have been mistaken for Nicole Kidman at screenings. But, unlike Nicole, I'm an active participant in filmmaking."



filming in the middle of a heat wave—115 degree days. The air conditioning in the studio where we were shooting was too noisy, so it was off most of the time. It was cooler outside than in there. I ended up in the hospital by the end with exhaustion and heat stroke. I don't put the film on my resumes. I haven't even shown it to my family. But you won't find what I learned there in any film school. You can't teach that. You have to just do it.

A brief supporting role on the TV soap *GENERAL HOSPITAL* followed. This was well after the Luke and Laura period. I played nurse Mindy Peake, a new love interest for a main character called Yank. Only in soaps are you going to find names like that," Schilling laughed. "It looked like a good part, but two months later they decided not to renew Yank's contract and his love interest went with him. I didn't even get to be hit by a truck, or have a brain tumor or anything. I was just gone."

Seeking roles more earnestly at this point, Schilling assembled a demo reel of her work. To her surprise, her time spent on the highly popular *GENERAL HOSPITAL* serial was viewed quite derisively by casting agents. "There is no respect at all for soap performers. It's incredibly demanding and difficult work doing them, but it carries little weight." Schilling hatched a scheme to make a low-budget short, starring herself, and pass it off in her demo reel as scenes from a feature-length movie. It was a gutsy deception that paid off.

Schilling had made the acquaintance of Eric Parkinson, a young man who was struggling for success on the other side of the entertainment business. "Eric was a breath of fresh air at this point. He was real. Not just another fantasy world hustler." Parkinson worked for an ultra-low-budget production/distribution group called Action International Pictures. AIP (not connected with the similarly acronymed American International Pictures or American Independent Pictures) had jumped on the action movie bonanza that followed *RAMBO*, churning out rip-offs of the Stallone mega-hit for undiscerning home video and foreign markets. With the action market dwinn-

"I ended up rewriting almost a third of *SOULTAKER* during production. There just wasn't the time or money to film what I'd written."



"My table was next to Arnold Schwarzenegger's at the Saturn Awards. When I won Best Video for *SOULTAKER*, Arnold shouted, 'Way to go, Vivian!'"

ding, AIP was looking for other types of films to produce or acquire from other outlets. Parkinson decided to produce a film that he could sell to AIP and thought Schilling's phony feature was just what he was looking for. "My short was an in-joke type thing about a struggling scriptwriter trying to come up with ideas during a Writers Guild strike," recalled Schilling. "Eric decided to expand on that idea and turn it into an anthology film illustrating the ideas she developed. The segments were actually student shorts from USC that we picked up for next to nothing." Parkinson directed the wrap-around segment with Schilling as the scriptwriter. The rest of the film was padded out with three student shorts.

Thus, *TERROR EYES* was born at a total production cost of \$38,000. Reviews

were decidedly mixed. "Either you liked its sense of humor or you didn't," offered Schilling. But it was profitable for all concerned. Schilling and Parkinson began working on ideas for a second, larger budgeted production to take advantage of the momentum from *TERROR EYES*.

While bouncing ideas off each other, Schilling related a particularly unpleasant memory to Parkinson. "Right after high school, a friend and I accepted a ride from a guy that we kind of knew from school. As soon as we got in, we knew we'd made a mistake. He was high on something and started driving like a maniac. He smashed into a tree, and I spent several hours with my face pinned against the dash of the car. They had to use the Jaws of Life to get me out. Looking back, I think I must have been in shock, but I can remember sitting there thinking that I should be dead, but that I had somehow cheated death for a little while, but that it would catch up with me. I didn't think they'd get me out alive, and I really thought death could come back for me." Schilling's voice takes on an odd timbre as she recalls the decade-old incident that served as the inspiration for *SOULTAKER*. "Eric developed the basic concept for the film from what happened to me."

In the movie, a group of teens escape death after a car wreck but find themselves in a limbo between life and death. Relentlessly pursuing them is the title character, whose job it is to see that they meet their appointed fate.

Schilling wrote the script. Raising \$250,000 from a production group called Pacific West, Parkinson chose Michael Rissi, who had directed the third segment of *TERROR EYES*, to helm the production. "Eric knew that AIP had been very pleased with the cooperation they got on several productions they filmed in Mobile, Alabama," explained Schilling. "So we did *SOUL TAKER* down there on a five-week shoot. We never could have made the film for that amount of money without that kind of civic cooperation. The whole film is basically night shots and mostly exteriors. Neither of which are easy to do on a low budget. I ended up rewriting almost a third of the film, during production, because there just wasn't the time or

money to film what I'd written.

In addition to writing both *TERROR EYES* and *SOUL-TAKER*, Schilling was involved in almost every aspect of their production, except casting. "I did do it a little for *SOUL-TAKER*," remembered Schilling, "but I really dislike it. I guess it comes from being an actress. I don't care for the whole process."

AIP bought the movie, which rendered the company its biggest production to date. *SOUL-TAKER* even had a limited theatrical release, courtesy of Parkinson. "AIP didn't have a theatrical distribution division so Eric did it pretty single-handedly," said Schilling. "It played less than a dozen cities but it did well in almost all of them, and it did well on video and very well overseas." Strangely, the only city it flopped in was Schilling's home town of Wichita, Kansas.

Before *SOUL-TAKER*, Schilling played a small role in another low-budget film, *PROJECT ELIMINATOR*, with cult favorite David Carradine. "It's an action film with a thread of a science fiction premise. I guess it's not too good. They had a very hard time getting distribution, but I enjoyed doing it. I know David gets a lot of bad press, but I really

"THE LEGEND OF WOLF MOUNTAIN primarily appealed to children. There's a shortage of fantasy films tailored just for kids."

"You have to have something to fall back on, I think. Otherwise, you end up doing films you really don't want to do, just for the work."



"I'm happy with *SOUL-TAKER*... if we had more money for the theatrical release, it could have built up more impact as a cult picture."

liked him. He deserves better than he's been getting." Though filmed before *SOUL-TAKER*, *PROJECT ELIMINATOR* sat on the shelf until months after the former's release.

Both Parkinson and Schilling parlayed *SOUL-TAKER*'s success into professional prosperity. Parkinson was soon heading the newly formed video division of Hemdale Pictures, and Schilling moved on to films with more substantial budgets and more recognizable casts. Ironically, Schilling plays a soap opera production chief in *MONKEY ZEITERLAND*, an art house-styled picture with Katherine Helmond and Martha Plimpton. Also coming soon is *FATAL AMBITION*, a thriller with Schilling portraying a movie actress whose stunt double is out to kill her and take her place.

While both *MONKEY Z* (as Schilling calls it) and *FATAL AMBITION* are independent productions, the connection between Schilling and Parkinson continues to be a fruitful one for both. Hemdale will soon release *THE LEGEND OF WOLF MOUNTAIN*, a family film with a supernatural subplot. "It's basically the story of two little boys who are kidnapped by robbers and try to make their way back home through a wilderness area. I play one of the boys' sister. They're lost in a sacred Indian area and I'm guided towards them by psychic messages from a wolf, who

sometimes transforms into an Indian warrior, to protect the boys. It offers a little more action and suspense than most family films do. There's even a bit of a message to it on environmental and Indian rights themes. I think parents will be as entertained as their kids by it." Schilling expressed disappointment that her role didn't allow her to share any scenes with another of the film's stars, Mickey Rooney. "I did get to work quite a bit with Bo Hopkins whom I really like. He's another actor, like Carradine, that the business has not treated well. It's sad to see people with that kind of talent and professionalism so often being saddled with work beneath their abilities. It's one of the reasons I've been concentrating a lot more on my writing recently. You've got to have something to fall back on, I think. Otherwise you end up doing films you really don't want to do, just for the work."

In various stages of pre-production at Hemdale are several Schilling-scripted films that will also offer her in lead roles. First up, a sequel—of sorts—to *SOUL-TAKER*.

Postscript (October, 1992)

Schilling's charmed career has recently hit at least a temporary snag. The financial collapse of Hemdale Pictures left several of her projects, and Parkinson's, in limbo. Scripts, written by Schilling, remain in various stages of pre-production. These proposed films, tailored for Hemdale, would have offered Schilling more opportunities to play leading roles. Among them was *BLACK CREEK*, a thriller set to be helmed by Anthony Hickox (*WAXWORK*, *SUNDOWN*, *HELLRAISER III*) with a cast including Corbin Bernsen and Beau Bridges. A more painful loss for Schilling was *SACRED PREY*. The studio's financial ruin has moved her "pet project" to the perennial back burner. "*SACRED PREY* is my baby," beamed Schilling. "I would really like to have directed it, but I don't want to risk blowing it in my first time out as director." The script has an action/thriller format, but Schilling is especially proud of its supernatural spin. "The main character is a professional killer who is only a few days away from a major hit. He goes to bed one night and awakens to find his consciousness inside his intended victim. Meanwhile, his real self continues to stalk him." While Schil-





One reviewer speculated that "Vivian Schilling could quite possibly be the leading lady of the '90s."

ling admits the scenario is difficult to abridge her excitement over the concept is pretty contagious, her disappointment over the work's postponement is equally obvious.

As an alternative, Schilling is preparing a novelization of *SACRED PREY* which she intends to personally publish sometime in 1993. "I just can't see taking it to a publisher just to have them take 80% of the income to do what I can do as well, or better, on my own." The Renaissance woman bristles at the thought of losing control over her creations. "It's the same reason I currently don't have an agent. I've never had one who did much for me except take his cut. In most cases I found the work, or even initiated it, and they still got their percentages. The industry expects you to have one, so I may have to break down. But I'll avoid it as long as possible."

Also orphaned is her Gothic remake of *FRANKENSTEIN*, which would have cast Christopher Walken in the title role. The project tied-in with Schilling's proposed adaptation of another horror classic—*Dracula*! "I had read Stoker's book for the first time and realized no one had ever really told that story. I wanted to combine what Stoker had done, with state-of-the-art makeup and effects . . . and the freedom to depict the erotic aspects of the story. I was really excited. I

actually cried when Francis Ford Coppola's version, *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*, was announced. I decided the same approach could be taken with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and started to work on that. Only now, I can cry again because it may never happen at all."

While most of Schilling's projects seem frozen in "development hell," at least her *SOULTAKER* sequel—tailored for a more generous budget than its precursor—stubbornly moves forward. "Hemdale's collapse really hurt me on that one. We weren't far from starting production on it as *DARK ANGEL*, with James Earl Jones and Faye Dunaway. I had a tough time on the sequel's script to start with. The film needs to be able to stand on its own if a viewer hasn't seen the original, yet it has to satisfy the fans of the original too. It was a big hit in Europe, so it can't be just a retread. Just when I had it all ironed out, they pull the rug out." After a hiatus to regroup and seek additional financing, the *SOULTAKER* sequel may see production as early as January, 1993.

"Luckily," noted Schilling, "some of the investors stayed with us. We've moved the production to Canada to take advantage of some benefits they can offer there. There have been some discussions about bringing Donald Sutherland in."

The film is now titled *DARK WORLD*, and Schilling has had conversations with Tibor Takacs (*THE GATE*) as a possible director. Schilling sought out Takacs after viewing his work in *IMAD-MAN*, a movie about a novel's homicidal character encroaching upon a woman's real world.

"What a great film!" enthused Schilling. "It bears little resemblance to the *NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* films and I guess it got lost because of that. But it's really much better than any of them. The visuals were just stunning. And the shifts between the real world and the world of the novel convinced me he could bring a similar approach to the clash of the real world and the *DARK WORLD*. Nothing's been settled, nothing signed, but I'm really interested in him for the job."

Keep an eye on Schilling's career. She's determined to make more than a dent in the film industry, particularly the male dominion that fuels the Fantasy Cinema. If she maintains her current pace, Schilling could move past her previous \$250,000 budgets and land some projects that would justify a \$5-\$10 million range. As one *SOUL TAKER* reviewer observed, "Vivian Schilling could quite possibly be the leading lady of the '90s." Don't rule out producer and/or screenwriter. □

DO YOU LIKE WOMEN?

FILMMAKERS NIX THE VAMPIRE TREND, OPTING FOR AN "EROTIC COMEDY" ABOUT CANNIBALISM.

BY DEBBIE ROCHON

It all began with *VALERIE*.

Director-writer Jav Land developed a script that explored a repressed young woman's sexual psyche. Valerie is inclined to fantasize about vampires, savoring their unrestrained eroticism. Her libido eventually explodes, and illusion trickles into reality.

A product reel was shot (about ten minutes) of film to impress potential investors. I was cast as Valerie's best friend, a role I would have reprised in the proposed feature-length version. But along came Francis Ford Coppola's production of *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*. Suspecting that Coppola's film will spark a profitable trend, a spate of vampire movies (something like two million, at last count) were suddenly being ground out. End of *VALERIE*. Why risk making a character study that distributors would generically lump into a vampire fad (which is doomed to

Sophie Daumier played dual roles, as twin sisters Violette and Marguerite, in the original *DO YOU LIKE WOMEN?* (1963). It's implied that Marguerite is the sibling who's served up at a cannibal ritual.



glut and fade by early next year—if not sooner, judging from the boxoffice failure of *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER* and *INNOCENT BLOOD*?)

Land and producer Jona than Faber were alerted to *AIMEZ-VOUS LES FEMMES?*, a 1968 black comedy written by Roman Polanski. The story involved a society of cannibals who catered to the elite. Exotic appetites were curbed with a menu of pretty women. Land rewrote the story for a predominately female cast, interpolating a contemporary theme of woman vs. woman (a cult of female predators seek out—and feast upon—vulnerable, attractive women). I was assigned the role of Susan Alexander, the inquisitive heroine who—in turn—is grilled by the cannibals. Though the updated scenario strays from Polanski's script, the title remains intact. *AIMEZ-VOUS LES FEMMES?* translates to English as *DO YOU LIKE WOMEN?*

Hencewith is my abridged promotional text on *WOMEN*, a film dependent on credit cards and sweat for its survival. The budget was lower than that of a typical Hollywood power lunch. Of course, Hollywood typically eats its own young (starlets) for lunch, but that's another story... or sequel.



In 1982's **DO YOU LIKE WOMEN?**, Debbie Rochon is the main course. Cannibal cooks, Alison Woodward and Maria Pechukas never met a woman they didn't like.



The cannibal cult (including Alison Woodward and Maria Pechukas in foreground) examine a menu of shapely swimmers at beach.

Production Diary

July 15th: The tickle I felt in my throat, on the train ride to the film's location, became raw and gave me a mild fever. I had hoped it would pass, but the only thing that went away was my voice. I didn't shoot

Pechukas and Rochon originally paired up for *VALERIE*. Only a product reel was shot.

any scenes. By 11 P.M., I was whisked back to the train station so I could return to New York and recoup. Upon my arrival home, I began wondering how long a B-movie could afford to wait for my recovery...

July 17th: Production has been shut down, at least temporarily, for two rather valid reasons. I had no voice, and they weren't willing to rewrite *WOMEN* as a silent picture; and Dan Brenner, the director of photography, needed a new deal written in the form of a contract (up to this point, everybody had been working without a contract). He walked out—taking the camera and lights with him. Dan was persuaded to return after an attractive compromise was negotiated. Then there was another setback—we lost our male star, Austin Pendleton (*WHAT'S UP DOC?*, *THE FRONT PAGE*) to SAG. It seems details weren't sorted out with the union. But the role has been recast and it appears as though we're back in business... for the present.

July 24th: Today, we shot the big date scene between the two lead characters. We used the house of Dan, the returning cameraman, for our location. Dan never mentioned that his house was located near an airport. Scenes had to be cut every time we heard plane noise, which was every five to seven minutes. Also, Dan's son has asthma and the scene we were doing required an actor to smoke. So, along with buzzing planes, our sound unit was picking up the poor little boy's wheezing. Dan's wife did not respond well to any of this. She later took the children on a family trip to Florida... with Dan.

July 25th: We shot a cannibal confrontation scene today. It went well, but there was one thing that troubled me. I overheard the director say that, after he's through editing the final cut of the film, anyone who gets on his bad side wouldn't be visible from the front. Come to think of it, today's scene was covered mostly from my backside. One could misinterpret this...

July 26th: Today, we finished the rest of the date scene. We compensated for the previous lack of coverage the V-neck of my dress invited. But every time the camera went in for a tight shot of me and my talents, the deflector would pop off the top of the camera. We finally succeeded in getting the shot and moved on to the next scene. The reflector miraculously behaved itself and we got a lot of shooting done, which was great for morale because so many shooting days had been cancelled due to inclement weather and conflicts with cast availability.

August 1st: I arrived at the Riverdeck location by two p.m. We shot some uncomplicated scenes at the Alaska (snack) stand. George Stover (who acted in John Waters' early films) arrived for his cameo role. He also took some 3-D photos of the cast and crew. The press showed up shortly after my arrival (I was interviewed by Channel 12). I noticed that Jonathan, owner of the location, was having



“The film was dependent upon credit cards and sweat for its survival. Our budget was lower than the tab of a Hollywood ‘power’ lunch.”

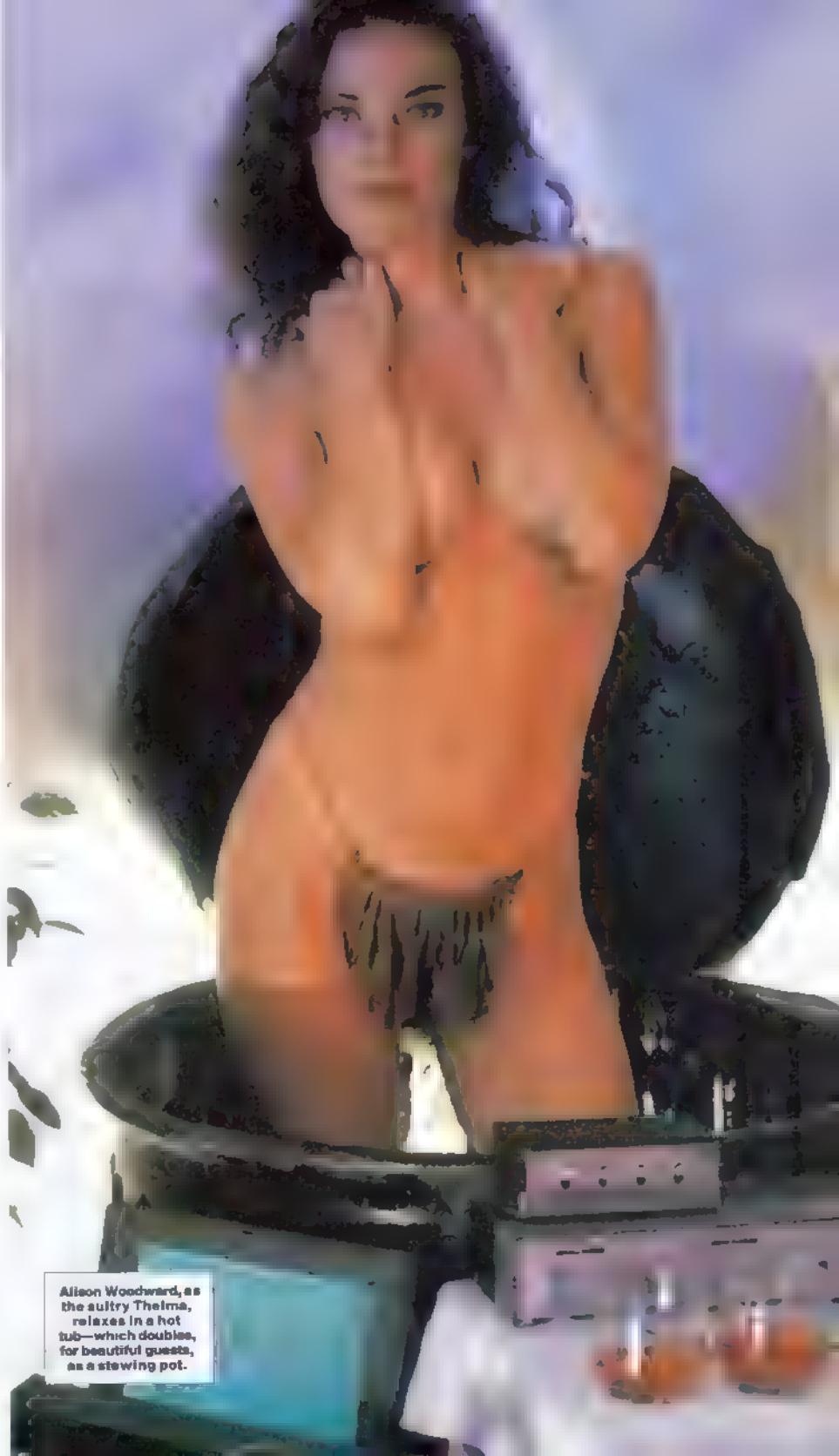
trouble with his wife over our takeover of his bar restaurant. She was either overly protective or very uncomfortable with the presence of scantily clad actresses slinking around. She made sure we wrapped by six p.m.

August 2nd One of the actresses was two hours late. The director said he had no choice but to cut her out of the scene. Two minutes after his decision, she arrived on set—and we ended up waiting another hour while she prepared herself. We were feeling the pressure of getting all necessary daylight shots before sundown. These constant problems, deceptively described as minor setbacks, trigger more repercussions than draining the budget. The cast and crew have to constantly reschedule their lives to preserve the main goal—shoot a great movie (a low budget and limited shooting schedule, notwithstanding). And if the same amount of dedication and reliability aren't invested by everyone, morale drops and the work becomes belabored.

August 4th We are now a couple of weeks behind schedule. It was my original obligation to play Susan, the film's heroine. But today, I was required to perform as a *different* character—Susan's cousin, Francie. I was offered the dual role after the actress originally cast as Francie abruptly declined to do nudity. I respect her decision—but to come to it the night before the scene is scheduled to be shot!

The script was hurriedly rewritten to tie-in with Roman Polanski's original screenplay. In the 1968 version of *WOMEN*, beautiful Sophie Daumier played twin sisters.

Alison Woodward, as the sultry Thelma, relaxes in a hot tub—which doubles, for beautiful guests, as a stewing pot.





Swimsuit model Alison Woodward previously appeared in *ANGEL HEART*. She spoofs the *PSYCHO* shower scene in *DO YOU LIKE WOMEN?*

"I was literally cooked again . . . I was stretched out on an over-sized grill, while Celia spiced me up with some barbecue sauce and an apple."

one sibling is served as a sumptuous meal to a cannibal cult, the other survives (at the film's fade-out, the hero is uncertain which sister winds up as his lover). Rather than two sisters (I played twin cousins (our film's beginning to sound like the lost episode of *THE PARADE DUKKE SHOW*).

I arrived on the set with minimal time to do a rough outline on the character. No method work here, folks—you gotta jumpin', and sink or swim. I had a lot of fun shooting my dinner scene with Maria Pechukas (who plays Celia, the cannibal cult leader with a taste for women). Of course, the remainder of today's shoot went smoothly . . . *not!* One of the key players didn't show up. We managed to shoot around her, but it was another setback that cost us another day.

August 5th: Tonight, in the second half of the Francie scene, the cannibal tribe turned me into human sushi. Hope nobody notices that yours truly was a little tense; served up on a table of unconverted brown rice (very cold and sticky). I performed my first nude scene. Someone else was even more nervous than moi! The owner of the restaurant, our setting for this scene, knew in advance there was going to be nudity. But, when the time came, she announced she didn't realize there was going to be *NAKED* nudity involved! Things were ironed out, and we proceeded to do a runthrough. I hit my last mark on the edge of a table, which promptly broke in two and yours truly spun to the floor in an involuntary game of Twister.

August 9th We're coming up with locations as we need



Debbie Rochon worked overtime. In mid-October she starred in a *WOMEN?* trailer

them. Films with more substantial budgets can lease them in advance. Unfortunately, we're not in that financial position. We determine which scene we're going to shoot based on the accessibility of a suitable location. Today, we managed to secure a setting for the cannibal house interior. We found it inside the house of one of our actresses' parents. Everything went well with the scene (the cannibal girls spent a quiet evening together swapping recipes). The next morning though, the homeowners complained that one of their floors was damaged by the burden of film equipment, adding a \$900.00 bill to our rapidly deflating budget. So much for a free location.

August 13th: I'm literally cooked again, this time as Susan. The scene required me to be stretched out on an over-sized grill, with Celia spicing me up with barbecue sauce and a fresh apple. I'm writing this while relaxing on the Hampton Bays location. It's raining so we don't know if we're going to get any more work done tonight. We still have to shoot my close-ups and escape shots, but I dunno.

August 18th: We shot my escape from the barbecue grill, and a scene in a phone booth where I try to summon help. We selected a public phone that was nestled near a couple of small town stores. During the last take, the police decided to make a surprise cameo appearance. They didn't ask for our permit papers. Lucky thing, because we didn't have any. But the officer, convinced we were wrapping up the shoot, peacefully departed. And so did I. Tonight, my work on

WOMEN? came to its conclusion. I'm looking forward to my next film project, regardless of whether it's an "A" or a "B" (I might have to work my way through the alphabet . . . skipping "X" of course). In the meantime, I'll be working off-Broadway in *Mill of Grace*. It's hard work, but a far cry from the butt-breaking, thankless and financially unrewarding travails of low-budget filmmaking . . . so how come, given a good script, I'd do it all over again tomorrow? □

Director Jay Lind supervises George Stover (*FEMALE TROUBLE*) and Debbie Rochon on the snack stand location.



COUNTESS DRACULA

SHE EMBELLISHED HER GENRE ROLES WITH STRENGTH AND SEXUALITY. INGRID PITTS RECALLS HER YEARS AS HAMMER'S "BAD GIRL."

BY BRUCE C. HALLENBECK

Even people who've seen the 100 career and career movies of actress Ingrid Pitt's career, knowing well the more or less predictable from movie to movie, might be surprised to see her high visibility recently and back from her Israeli sojourn to flamboyant outrageousness.

Her fame is primarily based on one trenchant Hammer horror, *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS*, made in 1970. As the bisexual Camilla, Pitt became one of the few horror heroines to have a high profile in the '70s. (Her personal energy probably would have been wasted in fainting-heroine roles.) She seemed to disappear for a decade, only to re-emerge a published author and raconteur at one of this year's Chiller Theatre conventions. Pitt seems to have scarcely aged in the 20 years since playing Camilla.

Pitt's early life was far more dramatic than most screen chills, beginning with her birth as she was on a train taking prisoners to a Nazi concentration camp. "My father was a Prussian," she said, "but since I was born on my way to another country, I don't know what I am—German, Polish or stateless. That never really concerned me. I'm a British citizen now. When you're happy in a place, it doesn't really matter where you are."

After a childhood in war-ravaged Berlin, she was reunited with her parents in East Berlin. They had hopes for her becoming a doctor, but Pitt demurred.

"I came straight from nursing and groaning about illness." Instead, she joined the Berthold Brecht Berliner Ensemble for three years and learned film acting at the DEFA Film School. A few months after the Berlin Wall went up, the teenaged Pitt fled the Communist city-state by swimming the River Spree, and impetuously married the man who fished her out of the water.

"Christ, from the beginning to that time was so weird," she shuddered. "It was traumatic, something I'd like to

forget. It's taken a long time to come to terms with it."

She moved briefly to the U.S. while her daughter Stefanie was born, then worked primarily in Europe. In Spain she made her first genre film, *THE SOUND OF HORROR* (1964). This production about an invisible dinosaur was equally invisible in the States, getting only sporadic notice. "There were only big footprints in the snow to represent the monster," she laughed. "I don't remember very much about it, except that I was cheap. Stefanie [in *COUNT DRACULA*] played my opposite number in it."

A showy role in the big-budget MGM war film *WHERE EAGLES DARE* (1969) looked like Pitt's break into the big time. The story featured only two prominent characters, the major one played by the late Mary Ure (wife of Robert Shaw) and a secondary role, played by Pitt. "I don't know if that was a big break or an anti-climax," she shrugged. "I thought big things would come from that—nothing! Maybe it was my own fault, going on a press jaunt when I should've gone to America. But I was enjoying myself. Being stupid



Pitt had no problem with her *VAMPIRE LOVERS* nudity. "I don't have any inhibitions when I come to that. As long as it's in the right context and makes sense in the story."



Photo: *Steve Schapiro*
Inset: *Steve Schapiro*
From *The Gallerist*
© 1988, *Time Inc.*

doesn't help," she laughed.

On location Pitt caught the appreciative eye of actor Ferdy Mayne, who played one of the Nazi generals. "Her arrival was rather grand," he said, "with this retinue and a feather boa trailing behind her, all rather like Dietrich had descended upon us. I said, 'Well, I'll remember that one!'"

"To jump from doing Spanish films to international pictures," recalled Pitt, "I lost my sense of proportion. I'd worked with Burton and Eastwood, so I must've arrived! When you are suddenly in that position, you are terribly lonely. You need advice, but I didn't even have an agent. I would have journalists ring up and I'd say something outrageous, which I would later regret . . . trite reprise which seems terribly funny at the time, but looks so tacky in the news papers."

Later that year, at the London premiere of another MGM film, Pitt was discovered by Hammer's founding father, Jimmy Carreras. "Or did I discover *him*?" asked Pitt. "I found him and would not leave him alone! He sat next to me and said, 'Why aren't you working?' Well, put me to work then! I'm available anytime you like!" I said, 'Right, then see me in my office tomorrow at 10 and I'll give you three parts,' he replied. I didn't realize that they were all in one film: reincarnations of Camilla, Mircalla and Millarca. And he said, 'Well, you'd better go home and get some rest so you look decent in the morning.' And I left right then!"

"Maxi fashions were just then in vogue. I showed up at the Hammer office the next morning in a black frock, long black coat and a big black hat. Since Jimmy was known as Colonel Carreras, which had been his rank in the war, I saluted and said, 'Private Pitt reporting for duty, Lieutenant Colonel Carreras, sir!'"

The project was **THE VAMPIRE LOVERS**, which had originated with two independent producers with the unlikely name combination of Fine and Style (Michael and Harry irrespectively). Carreras arranged a co-financing deal with American International in the U.S.

Screenwriter Tudor Gates' take on the Sheridan LeFanu novella *Carmilla* was more obvious than the three previous versions: Carl Dreyer's **VAMPYR** (1931), Roger Vadim's **BLOOD AND ROSES** (1960) and **TERROR IN THE CRYPT** (1963), starring Christopher Lee. The new screen permissiveness allowed for on-screen nudity and more graphic lesbian scenes. Pitt vaguely recalled working with director Roy Ward Baker on script revisions during the two months of pre-production. "So I must've been aware of how much nudity

INGRID PITT

"I was offered quite a few vampire films and turned them down. All they seemed to close in on was sexual exploitation."



Clint Eastwood and Pitt. On location for **WHERE EAGLES DARE**, relax between explosions. Pitt thought "great things would come" from her role.

was in it. But, you see, I don't have any inhibitions as long as it's in context!"

But she argued that the attractions between Carmilla and her victims was not gender bending the Dracula myth. "It wasn't lesbianism! I think vampires have no specific gender. It really didn't matter. If other people see it that way, fine, but I didn't play it that way. It all would've fallen flat on its face had I believed they were lesbians. Mircalla gave up her life compassionately for another being whom she loved. If there had been something sexual about it, it would've ruined this feeling of love. She truly loved Emma. She gave her soul for this woman. It had nothing to do with the fact that she was a girl. If the vampire had been a male, it would have been the same thing."

Off-screen antics at Elstree Studios provided comedy relief that the rather

stolid melodrama did not. The strikingly endowed Kate O'Mara (later of **Horror of Frankenstein** and **TV's Dynasty**) was victimized by the predatory Carmilla. Remembered Pitt, "When I was leaning over her, the fangs dropped out of my mouth and into her cleavage. Everyone on the set wanted to help retrieve them."

At a nearby theatrical pub during the shooting, actor Ferdy Mayne reminded her of their previous film. "I told her we'd worked together in Salzburg, on **WHERE EAGLES DARE** and she said, 'Oh, yes. You had a small part in that, didn't you?' Small part! I was a Nazi general—not such a small part. At any rate, she used rather provocative language between takes, and when she then became very pleasant and rather sexy, I accepted this as a sort of turn of character. It was quite delicious to be bitten by her."

Hammer's follow-up **LUST FOR A VAMPIRE** (1970) used a Tudor Gates script with Fine and Style producing. But the part of Carmilla went to the less expensive Yutte Stensgaard. Pitt didn't mind. "I was offered quite a few vampire scripts, but I turned them down, which maybe was wrong. The stories were banal and seemed to close in on the sexual exploitation angle, which I wasn't into."

Pitt's second Hammer film **COUNTLESS DRACULA** (1970), dramatized the real-life psychotic Elizabeth Bathory. "She lived in Transylvania in the 14th century and had this hang-up about bathing in virgins' blood. Lucky she isn't alive today or she probably wouldn't bathe very often."

Hungarian director Peter Sasdy (**TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA**) saw this as an opportunity to dramatize historical fact from his native land, an artistic bent at odds with the devil-worshipping angle in the script—Hammer's financial *raison d'être* and James Carreras' sales pitch.

"If it had been up to [producer] Alexander Paal, things would have been completely different," stated Pitt. "It was a case of extreme treason. Peter Sasdy wanted to do it his way and the picture suffered for it. He also wanted to change the title—after making a Hammer film—which wouldn't have coincided with Hammer's output. Jimmy Carreras didn't oblige him with a different title. He told him, 'You're not Eisenstein.' I would've thought everybody would've told him that. It was pretty apparent every day!"

Much of Pitt's bitterness may stem from the fact that Sasdy dubbed her performance with another actress, but her complaints are also structural. "The fear was cast aside by intercutting scenes of the countess going mad. If they stuck

with the entire scene of the countess going hysterically insane, it would've been better.

Pitt's cavalier attitude toward the press may have contributed to her brief stay at Hammer. "COUNTESS DRACULA was the same first-class production as THE VAMPIRE LOVERS. I think it was a step forward. Unfortunately, the press ran a story saying that I thought horror wasn't likely to get me anywhere. And Hammer got upset. It was totally untrue."

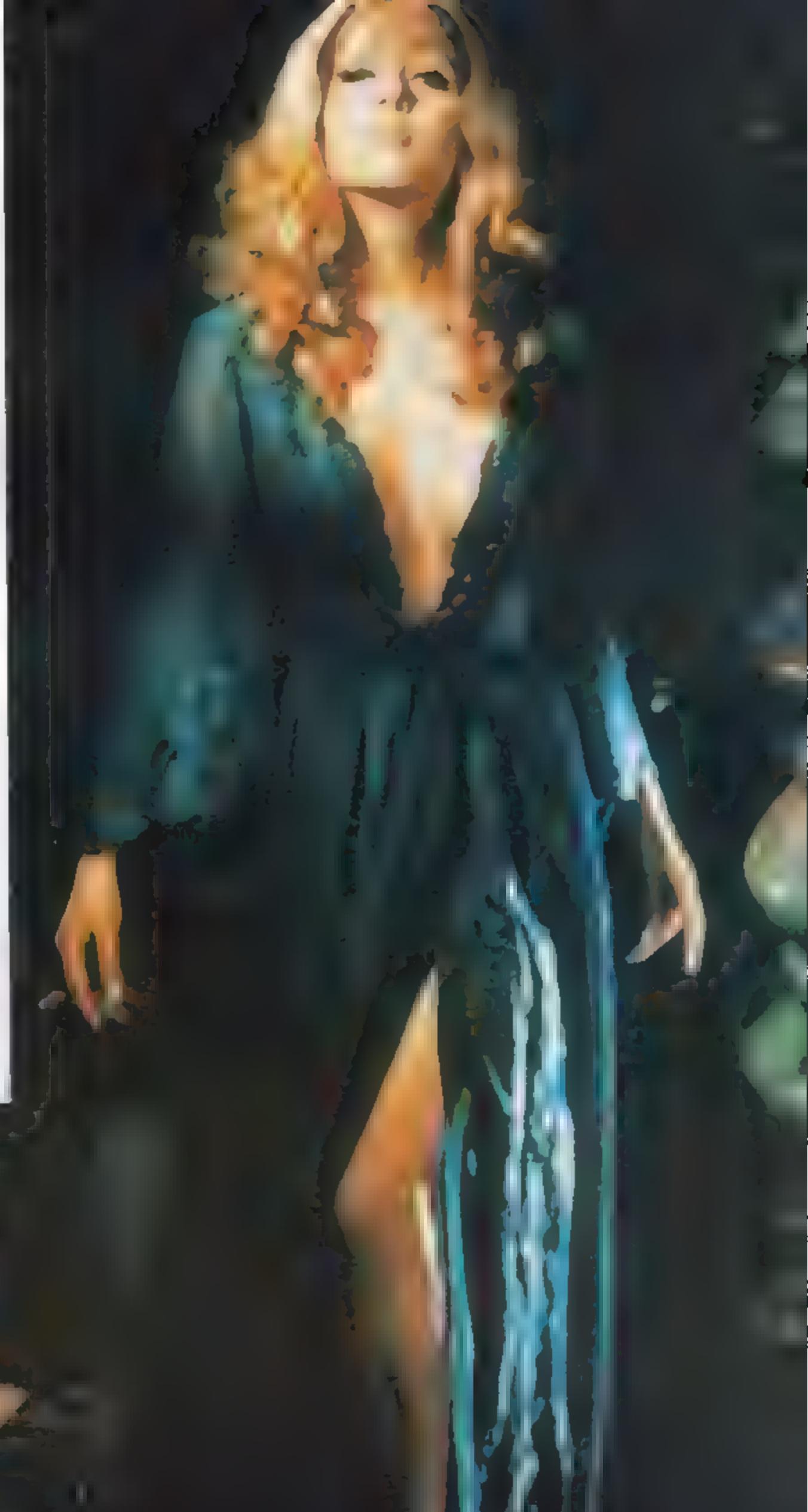
Between takes, Pitt tried to counsel her co-star out of his depression. Nigel Green's screen roles fluctuated wildly, from the lead in the first two Fu Manchu films (after which he was replaced by Douglas Wilmer, then Richard Greene), fifth billing in JASON & THE ARGONAUTS, an unbilled bit in GORGO, the heavy in William Castle's LET'S KILL UNCLE, and a wasted appearance in THE WRECKING CREW. "Nigel came to a very bitter period in his life," Pitt recalled sadly. "He felt he hadn't lived up to his potential. He probably hadn't, but *none* of us have! It's up to you to make it work. But he didn't see it that way. He held grudges against all kinds of people. I tried to make him feel differently, but he didn't want to hear me."

"I told him to see Sam Spiegel, who was casting NICHOLAS AND ALEXANDRA. He said, 'He knows where I am. He can ask for me.' He had too much pride, and when you have too much pride in this business, you don't always reach the people who ought to see you." The actor concluded his career with THE RULING CLASS. The film was released in 1972, the year that Green terminated his life.

Pitt's brief appearance in THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD echoed her vampiric roles in a humorous

COINTEGRATE on page 54

1970 was a banner year for Pitt: she was cast as COUNTESS DRACULA (right), and spoofed her vamp image in THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD.



Barbarian QUEEN

LANA CLARKSON INTRODUCES SEX APPEAL, AND A FEMINIST SLANT, TO SWORD AND SORCERY.

BY BRUCE C. HALLENBECK



Clarkson starred as Analhea in *WIZARDS OF THE LOST KINGDOM II*.

Let's say you're a film producer and your movie calls for a six foot blonde Amazon who can ride horses, shoot arrows and perform dangerous stunts. Who ya gonna call?

Lana Clarkson, that's who. The California-born beauty, who looks like a Frazetta rendering in the flesh, has graced a number of Roger Corman's fantasy films: *DEATH STALKER*, *WIZARDS OF THE LOST KINGDOM PART II*, *THE HAUNTING OF MORELLA* and *BARBARIAN QUEEN*. Seven years after the release of the latter film, Clarkson is back in the title role with *BARBARIAN QUEEN II* *THE EMPRESS STRIKES BACK* 1992. Once again she fights evil sorcerers and their minions, further developing her celebrity as a fantasy film icon.

Recalling that her parents were San Francisco hippies, Clarkson claimed she aspired to be an actress since infancy. "Absolutely!" she exclaimed. "Since about the age of two. There's no real history of acting in the Clarkson family so I guess I must have been born with this desire."

Her earliest "contracted" roles were in *FAST TIMES AT RIDGEMONT HIGH* (1982) and *SCARFACE* (1983). She played a biology teacher's spouse in *FAST TIMES*, a film that served as a launching pad for the likes of Jennifer Jason Leigh, Phoebe Cates and Sean Penn. "Penn was always in character on that film," said Clarkson. "He's actually a pretty nice

guy, although most people don't believe that."

Clarkson's bit part in *SCARFACE* allowed her to study director Brian DePalma. "It was great watching DePalma do his number," she said. "He's very intense. I just played a side girl, so I got to take it all in."

Modeling prompted her transition to a film career. "I had been working as a model in Europe and going into movies seemed the next step. I hadn't studied acting at all, but when I started working for Roger Corman, I guess you could say I went into the 'Corman School.' I went to amazing countries, learned languages and got to work with foreign crews. Quite an education."

She initially climbed to prominence not in a Corman movie, but as one of *BLIND DATE*'s featured players. Helmed by Nicos Mastorakis



AMAZON'S DANGEROUS
GIRL (right) is
demonstrative of
her "Amazon woman"
role. The "nude"
version of the film's
battle scene (bottom)
was visible only in
censored releases.



"I really do have a good time making these movies," explained Clarkson. "I always get in great shape while I'm doing them."

From crusades to cobwebs,
Clarkson as a comely witch
in *THE HAUNTING OF MORELLA*



(BLOOD TIDE), the 1984 horror film also provided exposure for Kirstie Alley (CHEERS) and supporting actresses cast in minor roles—including Valerie Golino (RAIN MAN) and Manna Sirtis (STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION). "That was my first film in a lead role," said Clarkson. "It was made before DEATHSTALKER. I got to be Joe Bottoms' fantasy in the film. He was my voyeur. It was fun to do—and Kirstie's a riot."

As the sword-wielding sidekick to DEATHSTALKER (1984), Clarkson was required to wear little more than a cape. The fantasy film, which co-starred Barbi Benton, was shot in South America. "I overacted in DEATHSTALKER," Clarkson admitted. "I've learned a lot since

then. But Hector (Olivero) is one of the top directors in Argentina, and I enjoyed working with him. I like Roger [Corman's] way of working. There's no waiting around. I guess you could say Roger's my mentor. We have the same birthdate, so every year we send each other gifts."

Clarkson's spirited performance as a woman warrior of beauty and strength prompted her casting in BARBARIAN QUEEN. The 1986 sword-and-sorcery film, also produced by Corman, was released to video in R-rated and unrated versions. What's the difference between the two?

"It's mainly in the torture scene," Clarkson explained. "That's the scene where I'm topless. It's probably my least favorite scene of all time. I'm

supposed to crush this guy with my legs, but they made it look as though I was raped. At least I got to throw him into a vat of acid later, so I got my revenge. The R-rated version was all filmed above the bust, but I've never done full-frontal nudity anyway."

Around that time, Clarkson filmed an episode of Steven Spielberg's AMAZING STORIES. "Tom Holland (FRIGHT NIGHT) directed me in that," she recalled. "I played a giantess brought to life by Jon Cryer, who plays a nerd. I had to be kissed within two minutes to stay alive."

Continuing roles that stressed a "larger than life" stature, Clarkson was appropriately cast in AMAZON WOMEN ON THE MOON (1988). The John Landis pro-

duction, boosted by a diverse cast of A- and B-movie vets (Rosanna Arquette, Russ Meyer, Carrie Fisher, Monique Gabrielle), was a series of satiric sketches and blackouts. In a spoof of cheap "rocket ranger" shows, a fixture of early TV entertainment, Clarkson played Alpha Beta. "I got that role as a result of a TV show I did called **GEORGE BURNS' COMEDY WEEK**," said Clarkson. "John Landis worked on that. The show was fun because I got to wear dowdy clothes until the end when I transformed into a sexpot."

"John is like a kid on the set. **AMAZON WOMEN** was more of a challenge than you might think. It's not easy to act 'badly' well, if you know what I mean. And there was the semi-schlock '40s and '50s glamour. My fans seemed to like that character because I get a lot of mail about it."

Clarkson delivered her most dramatic performance to date, as a witch with a taste for women, in **THE HAUNTING OF MORELLA** (1990). Produced by Roger Corman, **HAUNTING** is essentially an expanded remake of the Morella episode from the Corman-directed **TALES OF TERROR** (1962). Clarkson shared screen time with David McCallum, whose brooding presence is far removed from the **MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E.** persona that haunts his career. "David's great," raved Clarkson, "a very quiet, nice man. He was incredibly concentrated on this film, whereas I tend to drop in and out of character on the set. I'm always in character when the camera's on, but when it's off I may just go back to being me. David doesn't do that."

A scene, played beneath a waterfall, required Clarkson's character to engage in a lesbian tryst with a maid (Maria Ford); the sensuous union concludes with the maid's murder. Strong stuff for an R-rated film. Are provocative scenes, in this capacity, difficult for the actress?

"No, I had no problem with it," said Clarkson. "[Director] Jim Wynorski did a nice job. It was beautifully choreographed as she fell

'I guess you can say I went to the 'Roger Corman school.' I went to amazing countries learned languages and got to work with foreign crews.'



The curvaceous Clarkson as **THE BARBARIAN QUEEN** (1988). She reprised the role in the 1992 sequel, **THE EMPRESS STRIKES BACK**.

slowly down my body. It was very sensually done." Clarkson's only reservation about **HAUNTING** was her physical appearance in the film. "I had just gotten out of a leg cast and I had put some weight on. In that film I'm bigger than I ever was. Six weeks later I was back to my normal size. A lot of people thought I was just a voluptuous Victorian in **MORELLA**, which I'm grateful for."

Clarkson seems to have an ability to turn deficits into assets. "When my leg was still in the cast, a girlfriend of mine—who's also an actress—told me that someone was looking for a tall, beautiful blonde with her leg in a cast for a short film. I couldn't believe it! I went to the audition—it was a film called **LIFTED**—and, needless to say, I got the part. My girlfriend said, 'Only you could ever get a film role with your leg in a cast!'"

According to *Variety*, the heroes of **WIZARDS OF THE**

black humor. "It was fascinating to work with Chuck and to hear the stories about the movies that he and Roger used to make. He's quite a character."

Grateful that she learned how to charge with a lance, Clarkson also enjoyed working with Carradine. "He's a real pro, and a very pleasant man, who's starting to turn his career around. I'm friends with his wife, Gail."

The rough-and-tumble action of her latest film, **BARBARIAN QUEEN II: THE EMPRESS STRIKES BACK**, wasn't entirely scripted. "I took some good falls on that one," laughed Clarkson. "I do most of my own stunts. But I enjoyed it. I take the responsibility of carrying a picture very seriously. You know, it's tough to make some of those lines come across. You have to believe in the moment. There's a fine line you have to walk."

BQII was shot in Mexico, much of it in Mexico City, where the pollution bothered Clarkson. "But, I was treated very well. There aren't many six-foot blondes in Mexico, you know," she said.

She appears unfazed by the risk of stereotype. "I really do have a good time making these movies. I always get in great shape while I'm doing them. I work out anyway, but making a film like **BARBARIAN QUEEN II** really improves the muscle tone."

Clarkson also works on television fairly often, and recently guest-starred in an episode of NBC's **WINGS**. "Comedy is really my favorite thing," she said. "I don't mind being typecast in fantasy, but I also don't mind making fun of my own persona. I enjoy the production side of filmmaking too. I'd like to be a top 'A' actress, sure I'd love to do a big feature film."

"I just spent a year in Europe doing freelance modeling and acting. I went to the Berlin Film Festival, which is not really big on glamour, so I really had that market cornered." Hardly a challenge for a ravishing Ramboette who has triumphed in less civilized territories. □



Initially conceived as one of the living dead, Elvira was designed as a "woman-vampire."

ELVIRA

Continued from page 1

Peterson's identification with her macabre alter ego affords her a level of privacy few celebrities can claim, after all, most fans don't recognize her without Elvira's makeup and costume.

What usually gives me away is the voice," she said. "People look at me and have no recognition, but they'll hear me talk and start staring at me until they put two and two together. People always think they went to school with me. They recognize me but they don't know from where."

A sequel to *ELVIRA, MISTRESS OF THE DARK* is Peter-
son's top priority. "We had a
deal with Carolco and they'd just
made the biggest selling movie
ever, *TERMINATOR 2—JUDG-
MENT DAY*—but that cost too

there is an Elvira television show in the planning stages (options include the development of a sitcom or "talk show" format), and a possible animated series.

In a business that tends to stress youth and beauty, the inevitable question arises: how much longer can the 40-year-old entertainer keep straining her bodice of her costume? "When the jobs come in for Elvira, I take them because I'm making hay while the sun shines, you know?" smiled Peterson. "I don't want to be Elvira when I'm old with my cleavage dragging down to my knees." With her global appeal firmly intact—and the sales of Elvira merchandise still solid—Peterson shouldn't worry about hanging up her specially designed, Lily St. Cyr brassieres just yet. □

BRIDES OF DRACULA

Continued from page 14

time's Day. That sensual quality must be there—if you released it on a day when love is celebrated! How beautiful!"

CAMERA MAN

continued from page

course, ask Sean Young about that. But two hours later, Pedota received a call from Burton's assistant, now quite cooperative and upbeat, saying the director wanted to see Pedota's portfolio. Burton was impressed with the "avantphotography" (as Pedota has dubbed it) and gave him the job of shooting DeVito, Keaton and Pfeiffer for the worldwide publicity campaign.

His use of a "twisted tungsten" technique produced fantastic vibrant other-worldly colors not generally found in nature. For the portraits of Michelle Pfeiffer, for instance, her lips were painted bright blue, and she was shot on color infra-red film. The resulting weird liquid magenta lips pouted from bus stops and billboards everywhere, or until the midnight collectors got to them. As is common with flexing film schedules, his promised one-day-each with the stars became considerably less two quick 15 minute sessions in the case of Pfeiffer. It was enough.

No doubt Pedota's poster triptych will make the rounds in upcoming sci-fi conventions. It's a continuing thrill for the photographer. He may still be

delivering pizzas, but the Burton connection lives on. With his first big paycheck as a professional Hollywood photographer, he splurged on a two-tone 1958 Jaguar. Not quite the high-tech crime-stopper Bruce Wayne drives at night, perhaps, but as the smell of pepperoni and cheese walls into the night, you can barely make out the personalized license plate, BATCAR. □

CATWOMAN

continued from page 44

much more threatening and certainly more feminine I started about a month before shooting doing all the training and I averaged four hours a day doing everything—these were obviously used as weapons, because I accidentally drew blood on my whipmaster

How did you get along with Tim Burton?

Tim Burton has a very unusual and sophisticated way of viewing the world. There is an innocent, childish, wicked darkness to his films, all of them. And nobody else is doing that. That's a sign of genius. He thinks he doesn't communicate well, but he really does. Maybe in the past it was a problem, but I think he's further along than he thinks he is.

Would you do the role again, given the chance?

I'd really like to see how much further the character could evolve, but that's not up to me. I would love to do it again if it were

laughed, "because Jon Pertwee [actor/writer and former Dr. Who] made it into a comedy. It wasn't like that when we got the written pages."

Her appearance in *THE WICKER MAN* was equally brief, consisting mostly of bathing nude in a tub, to the embarrassment of puritanical hero Edward Woodward. The film's troubled production and release are legendary. Several minutes were cut out and never restored.

"For me, it was just my little body that went on the cutting room floor. You've seen two peeks at it, you've seen 20; it's the same body; it didn't matter that much. Chris Lee had endless lines cut and was very unhappy. He owned part of the picture, so it was more painful. But the original had too much wordage anyway."

Of Cushing and Lee, Pitt said diplomatically, "They're completely different. You can't compare them at all. One is an intellectual, emotional, serene, the other an action man. Christopher isn't aloof at all. He speaks his mind, which an aloof person doesn't do, a fantastic raconteur and an absolute *must* at parties... if you mind not saying so much *yourself*."

Pitt said husband Tony Rudin tried to produce films in Argentina, but a coup and an arbitrary military censor kept scuttling the projects. Instead, she turned one of the scripts into a novel, *Cuckoo Run*, published in Britain in 1980. "It was supposed to be a TV series," explained the author, "a female James Bond. But the publishing company was sold, so they didn't continue the series. I tried to get [007 producer] Cubby Broccoli interested when he was looking for a new Bond. I said, 'Turn him into a woman. I very nearly got him to agree.'"

With nine books and a dozen spec screenplays, Pitt now concentrates more on the literary and less on the performing arts. Roy Skeggs considered several of her scripts for the most recent Hammer video films. "But as my scripts were coming to the fore, they got the chop. You can wait so long for something to happen — you just have to keep moving on." She has just put the finishing touches on a collection of terror tales with the winsome umbrella title *The Pitt of Horror*. "I'd like to keep entertaining people for as long as I can," she said radiantly. "And I love the horror genre." And that pendulum swings both ways; the horror genre loves Pitt. □

up to me, but these movies really take a lot out of Tim. As you saw, the scope is so huge and he's only one person. But I would like to do it again with Tim very much.

Do you see BATMAN RETURNS as following a trend of action and fantasy films with dynamic female characters who also have believable motivations and emotions?

There are more strong women's roles today: *TERMINATOR 2*, *ALIEN 3*, *LETHAL WEAPON 3*. And I think that movies of this genre work better if you can emotionally engage people. I think I did that. I hope so.

You mean, in women fighting back, taking control of their own lives?

I do think that there are women out there who are in the work force and who are not listened to and are harassed in the workplace, who are terrified of their boss, and who haven't been able to find a voice for themselves. I think that there probably isn't a woman living who doesn't know what it feels like, who hasn't experienced that at one point or another in her life. Catwoman/Selina is an inspiration. She's tragic—but she's also an inspiration. □

INGRID PITT

continued from page 55

vein. Robert Bloch's source, *The Cloak*, was a straightforward tale of an actor and a haunted cape. "That was great," she

To Order By Mail

Check items and fill out form below (a Xerox copy or handwritten list is acceptable). Credit card order (Visa and Mastercard only) should include signature, card number and expiration date. Make checks, money orders, and bank drafts payable to FEMME FATALES. Foreign orders please pay by credit card or international postal money order only (US funds).

Shipping Information

All items except video cassettes are shipped US Mail. Video cassettes are shipped UPS. Please note: UPS does not deliver to P.O. boxes. Please allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery. Items ordered at the same time are not necessarily shipped together.

Shipping Charges

No charge for back issues, posters, or subscriptions to CINEFANTASTIQUE or FEMME FATALES. Add per item: \$1.50 (US) \$3.00 (Foreign/Canada) for books and calendar, \$3.00 for binders, \$1.00 for photo and \$3.50 for video cassettes. Note: Residents of Illinois must add 7.75% sales tax to all but magazine orders.

FEMME FATALES SUBSCRIPTIONS

(Back Cover)

- 4 issues (U.S.) \$18.00
- 4 issues (Canada/Foreign) \$21.00
- Begin with Vol 1 No 3
- Begin with Vol 1 No 4

FEMME FATALES

(This Page)

- Femme Fatales Vol 1 No 1 \$ 8.00
- Femme Fatales Binder \$ 7.95

LIMITED EDITION ART POSTERS

(Page 2)

- 22-6 22-5 22-4 21-3
- 1 poster \$ 6.95
- 2 posters \$12.95
- 3 posters \$18.95
- 4 posters \$23.95

CINEFANTASTIQUE BACK ISSUES

(Page 2)

- Vol 22 No 6 \$ 8.00
- Vol 22 No 5 \$ 8.00
- Vol 22 No 4 \$ 8.00
- Vol 21 No 3 \$ 8.00

CINEFANTASTIQUE SUBSCRIPTIONS

(Page 2)

- 4 issues (U.S.) \$18.00
- 4 issues (Canada/Foreign) \$21.00

COLLECTIBLES

(Page 63)

- The Bare Facts Video
Guide Edition 2 \$10.95
- Debbie Rochon Photo \$ 7.95
- Elvira Calendar \$10.99
- Femme Fatales Vol 1 No 2 \$ 8.00
- Invasion of the B-Girls \$12.95
- The James Bond Girls \$24.95

Femme Fatales



The first issue of our brand new quarterly, *Femme Fatales*, is a high-quality, full-color publication loaded with great articles and color photos of the gorgeous gals of the B-films. \$8.00



Keep *Femme Fatales* in mint condition with this custom binder covered in saucy hot pink vinyl with the *Femme Fatales* design printed on the front and spine. Each binder contains 12 wires. \$7.95

- Scream Queen
Hot Tub Party Video \$29.95
- I am 18 or older (sign below)
- Sex on the Screen \$14.95
- Traci Lords on Paper \$14.00
- Trailers on Tape Vol V
Horrible Honey \$34.95
- The X-Rated Videotape
Guide \$16.95
- The X-Rated Videotape
Guide II \$17.95
- Yvette Stensgaard \$ 6.00



Visa/Mastercard Dial:
1-800-798-6515

P.O. BOX 270, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS 60303

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

SIGNATURE (credit card orders only, or to signify you are 18 to order tape)

Account # _____

Exp. Date _____

VISA

MC

“Has all the markings of a potential cult classic.”**THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE**

(1991) Cast: Craig Peck, Bonnie Bowers, Mark Colver, Wendy Bednarz, John Caehart III, Jeff Dachis, Claudia Flores. Director: Rolfe Kanefsky. Executive Producer: Alice Glenn. Producer: Victor Kanefsky. Script: Rolfe Kanefsky. Valkhn Films.

Appropriately, **THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE** opens with a nightmarish sequence inside a video store. While a nubile, young blonde clerk is chased by an intruder, a clutter of lurid horror movie cartoons set the mood. The film then deliberately shifts to familiar horror film territory: seven college kids travel to a remote cabin near a lake for their spring break. Inevitably, they'll be menaced by some stalking terror, only to become monster-fodder. The references to **FRIDAY THE 13TH** are obvious from the start, but that was the intent of filmmaker Rolfe Kanefsky.

“Did you notice the class-



REVIEW BY
BRENICE STEVENS

room blackboard?” Kanefsky asked me in a phone interview. I went back and watched the scene he was referring to—and sure enough, written on the chalkboard in big letters was “We're In Movie Hell!” Film references weave in and out of the movie. At one point, some of the teens discuss the possibility that they're celluloid characters. When Stacy (Bonnie Bowers) strips for sex with her boyfriend, he says, “I'm enjoying the view.” She replies, “Yeah, you... and everybody else!” In a climactic battle with a slimy, toad-like alien, one of the boys escapes by grabbing a low-hanging boom mike, swinging to safety. Rolfe Kanefsky knows how to spoof his own genre... and zestfully gets away with it.

“I once had a free week, so as an exercise, I tried to write a horror script,” he said. “It started out serious, but got campier as it went along.” For preparation, Kanefsky saw dozens of horror flicks. His studied approach included such industry standards as **THE EVIL DEAD**, **INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS**, Dario Argento movies, and of course, the **FRIDAY THE 13TH** series. Finally, in 1990, at the age of 20, Kanefsky spent five weeks and \$300,000 shooting his first horror script, **THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE**. Critics have since christened him “the next Sam Raimi.”

On one level, **THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE** works as a serious horror film, but beneath the scary surface lurks a delightful in-joke

Rejecting the sex-begets-violence syndrome, Bonnie Bowers tantalizes but survives!



The monster, called “Little Guy” by cast and crew, hates shaving cream, but obviously adores Claudia Flores.

satire. When the unsuspecting teens head for the isolated cabin, they pass a car wreck. Mike (Craig Peck), the horror film buff in the group insists, “This is what's known as the warning stage.” But his friends, who think he's seen too many B-movies, don't take him seriously. Later, when a group of pot-smoking punks invade the private lake, Mike intones, “Have you ever heard the word ‘foreshadowing?’ Those kids were born to be murder victims!”

I've always wondered why characters in movies have apparently *never* seen movies. For example, if the people in **RAISING CAIN** had only watched DePalma's **DRESSED TO KILL**, they might have figured it out faster. It was refreshing to see Kanefsky's unique approach. A sarcastic Mike says, “Why don't I just take a nice stroll down that dirt path into the woods, late tonight, all by myself?” Sure enough, despite his warnings, a couple of friends head into the woods... naturally one of them doesn't come back. Still unconvinced, Mike's pals get so sick of his gloomy remarks that they lock him in the basement. Unfortunately, the ugly, tentacled beast, who's only interested in

killing off the boys and mating with the girls, is down there too...

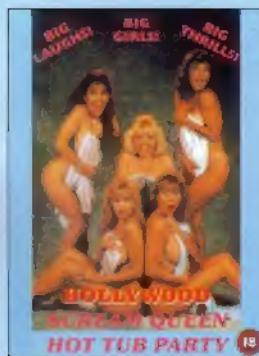
With a judiciously used effects budget of about \$6,000, there's a nice dissolving human head and a gory decapitation scene. Cameraman Ed Hershberger's fast, dizzying low-angle shots generate good tension and fear. As for the monster, Kanefsky said, “I didn't want a guy in a creature suit, so I made it smaller.” For one scene, they economically laced the monster atop a remote-controlled toy truck and followed it with a Steadicam.

The cast, relative newcomers to the screen, provide solid acting abilities. The lovely lasses obligingly show plenty of skin: lengthy shower scenes, skinny-dipping, love making and prancing around in skimpy bikinis. There are lots of cat-fights, screaming, bodice ripping and lascivious attacks by a sex-driven alien creature. In short, **NOTHING** has all the markings of a potential cult classic... it's a good party tape.

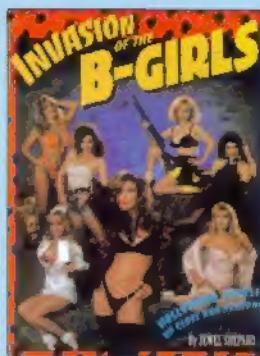
Distributed by Prism, **THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE** is now available on video after a short theatrical run last October in Seattle. □

Fatale Collections

SIZZLING, BEST-SELLING MOVIE COLLECTIBLES



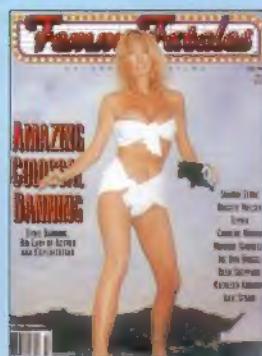
The educational film of the year. When the Scream Queens get together in the hot tub, it's great fun. Starring Brinna Stevens, Monique Gaetane and Michelle Bauer. Must be 18 to order. VHS, \$29.95.



Femme fatale Jewel Shepard has interviewed her friends and colleagues and their comments are candid, honest and scintillating. Learn the most guarded secrets of today's hottest B-girls. Illustrated. \$12.95.



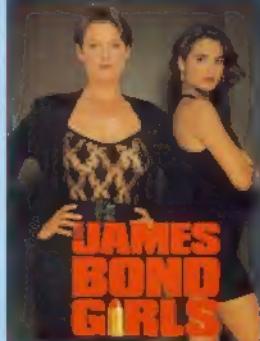
This gorgeous oversized volume (11 x 16 1/2) features 12 full-page photos in black and white and color suitable for framing and one double-page centerfold of the beautiful Traci Lords. Paper, 28 pp. \$14.00.



The second issue of our brand-new, full-color quarterly, *Femme Fatales* features Sybil Danning, the big lady of action and exploitation cinema. Interviews with Elvira, Caroline Munro, and others. \$8.00.



Featuring your favorite Mistress of the Dark in twelve different provocative poses, this 1993 calendar provides an entire year of photos in full-color and black and white of the incomparable Elvira. \$10.99.



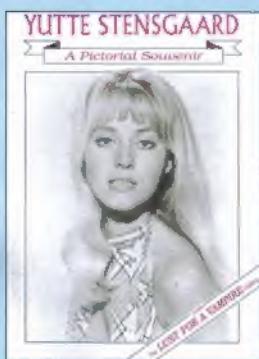
Featuring over 100 dazzling color photographs, this oversized volume by Graham Rye is the first to present a collection of photos of the most gorgeous 007 women. Paper, 64 pp. 14 1/4 x 10 1/4. \$24.95.



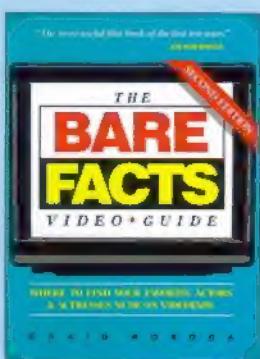
HORRIBLE HONEY—Trailers on tape, including: Bride of Frankenstein, Frankenstein's Daughter, Daughter of Dr. Jekyll, Attack of the 50-Foot Woman, Devil Girl from Mars and more. VHS, 78 min. \$34.95.



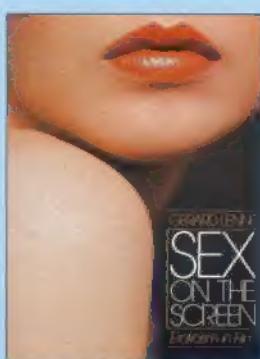
Full color, glossy 8x10 of Debbie Rochon, personally autographed by the actress who has appeared in *LONELY IN AMERICA, PART INC.* currently starring in *DO YOU LIKE WOMEN?* \$7.95.



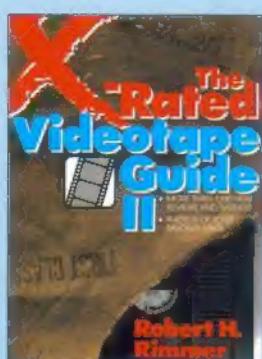
This book by Tim Greaves is a pictorial souvenir of the films of Hammer's loveliest screen vampire, Yutte Stensgaard. Including many rare black and white photos. Paper, 39 pp. 6 x 9". \$8.00.



Established actors and actresses often do nude scenes at the beginning of their careers before getting their "big break." Craig Hosoda references these incidents for easy accessibility. Paper, 10.95.



Author Gerard Lanne discusses at length the boxoffice popularity of skin flicks, censorship and the rights of filmmakers and viewers. Loaded with provocative photos. Paper, 245 pp. \$14.95.



The X-Rated Videotape Guides I and II by Robert H. Rimmer includes movie summaries and background material on adult films from 1970 to 1985 (Vol I) and 1986-1991 (Vol II). Paper, \$16.95 & \$17.95.

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE ORDER FORM, SEE PAGE 61

Femme Fatales

Spring 1993

OF THE FILMS

\$5.50
CAN \$8.75
UK £3.50

Traci Lords

FROM X-RATED
HARLOT TO
HORROR STARLET

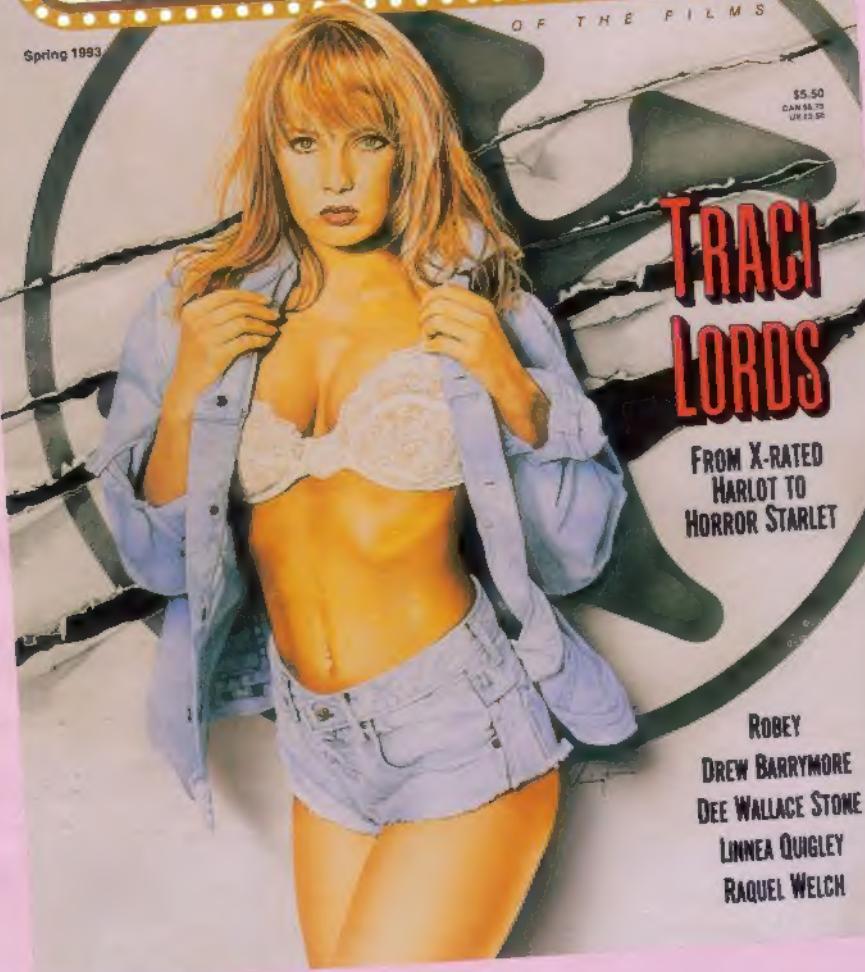
ROBEY

DREW BARRYMORE

DEE WALLACE STONE

LINNEA QUIGLEY

RAQUEL WELCH



SUBSCRIPTION BRINKESMANSHIP

Call in your charter subscription today or use the order form below (or its facsimile), and we'll send you by return mail, a full-color, glossy, 8x10 photo of Brinke Stevens, the cover girl of our premiere issue, personally autographed by the movie actress who also serves as *Femme Fatales*' West Coast reporter.

Your subscription starts with our fourth quarterly issue (left), which hits newsstands April 20th, or check the box for Vol 1 No 3 in the coupon below. Magazines are mailed sealed in plastic to arrive in mint collector's condition, shipped direct from our printer to reach you before they hit the stores!

Order Toll Free
1-800-798-6515

Here's what you can expect in our next exciting issue:

- Traci Lords, an interview with the porn star who went legit, on her career and the filming of *SKINNER*, the horror film designed to slash her X-rated image.
- The Women of *BABYLON 5*, pictorials and interviews with Blair Barron, Patricia Tallman and Laurel Takishima, the comely cosmonauts of the SF series that hopes to "shape up" to *STAR TREK*.
- Donna Speir, the action/adventure star of the films of Andy Sidaris, on her career, plus an interview with Sidaris, the low-budget heir of James Bond-style guns and gals movie excitement.
- Dee Wallace Stone, the star of *E.T.* on her career from *THE HILLS HAVE EYES* to her latest sexy starring role.

Autographed 8x10 of
Brinke Stevens, Free!

Femme Fatales

P.O. BOX 270,
OAK PARK, ILLINOIS 60303

Enclosed is my \$18 (\$21 Canada/Foreign) in check, money order or credit card information (Mastercard and Visa only), please enroll me as a Charter Subscriber for the first four quarterly issues.

Name _____ Start Sub With: _____

Vol 1 No 3
 Vol 1 No 4

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

SIGNATURE (credit card orders only)

Account # _____ Exp. Date _____

VISA
 MC

Coupon Not Required To Order

